MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

By

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Edited

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

by

EXPERIENCED PROFESSORS

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INTRODUCTION

1. Life of Shakespeare.

William Shakespeare was born at Stratford-on-Avon, in the country of Warwickshire, in April 1564. The day of Shakespeare's birth cannot be properly ascertained. His father John Shakespeare was a farmer and traded in all kinds of agricultural productions. At the time of William's birth, his father was quite well off. He had married well and had become a burgess of Stratford. William was the third child.

He was soon sent to the Stratford Grammer School. There he received a little classical education. Inspite of Ben Johnson's sneer at Shakespeare's knowledge of "little Latin and less Greek," it seems clear that he was well grounded in Latin. His school life was, however, soon cut short. From 1557 financial troubles began to come down on John Shakespeare. Within the next ten years they grew from bad to worse. A part of his wife's estate had to be sold; he was himself prosecuted for debt and lost his alderman's status in 1586. So William had to leave school, when he was probably fifteen or sixteen.

Now our hero spent his time probably doing nothing, except sporting about the place and making himself agreeable to the girls. Very soon the impulsive young fellow fell in love, and with a girl eight years older than he. Their marriage became necessary, and by the end of 1582 we find our poet, at the age of eighteen and a half, getting ready to support a family. His wife Anne, who was the daughter of a husbandsman, Richard Hathaway, gave birth to a daughter on May 26, 1583. William probably continued to stay at Stratford till after the birth of a twin boy and girl, Hamnet and Judith, in 1585.

Probably in 1587, William Shakespeare left for London. There is a tradition that the immediate cause of his departure was the deer stealing adventure in the park of Sir Thomas Lucy. There was, however, a strong reason in his father's growing poverty. The visit of the dramatic company, known as the Queen's players, in 1587 may have also had something to do with it. So at last William Shakespeare took the way to London. But by 1592 we find him a successful author and actor. His position, then even, excited the envy of the "University Wits." He soon became a member of Lord Shamberlain's Company. After serving it for some time as an actor and arranger of plays, he became a partner and share-holder of the Globe Theatre in 1599.

By 1602 William Shakespeare was quite a famous man. He had managed to restore his father's fortunes and had bought 107 acres of land near Stratford. He had also received a gift of £ 1000 from his patron, the Earl of Southampton, to whom he had dedicated *Venus and Adonis* and the *Rape of Lucrece*. As we learn on the testimony

of Francis Meres, a Professor of Rhetoric at Oxford, Shakespeare's fame had now widely spread, and outdistanced all his competitors both in tragedies and comedies. In May 1602 King James granted a licence to Shakespeare and his company to play in London and in the Province.

He had probably started writing his plays in 1592. He began, it may be supposed, by reshaping old plays to meet the fashions of the time. He had started probably, with his *Love's Labours Lost* and *The Comedy of Errors*. By 1609 he finished his great tragedies and left London for Stratford. No, fixed date can be ascertained but the internal evidence of his plays and sonnets obliges us to conclude that he left London sometime about 1609.

In 1594, Shakespeare has purchased New House. Further addition had been made to his estates by frequent purchases. These possesions soon roused in his heart a yearning for his native land. Thus by 1611 we find him well established at New Place. In the meantime his elder daughter Susannah had been married to one Dr. John Hall, in June 1607. In the very year of Shakespear's death, his next daughter Judith married Thomas Quiney.

Shakespeare's health began to break down about this time. On March 25 he executed his will. About a month later, on April 23 1616, he died at New Place. He was buried in the chancel of Stratford Church on the 25th. Very little is known about the cause of his death. The only report of the incident is to be found in the Diary of the Rev. John Ward, who was appointed Vicar of Stratford in 1662. Here we learn that "Shakespeare, Draydon, and Ben Johnson had a merrie meeting, and it seems drank too hard, for Shakespeare died of a fever there contracted." Probably a merry evening, with a bad health, brought about his death.

On the stone over his grave was engraved the following:

"Good friend, for Jesus' sake forbear
To dig the dust enclosed here.
Blest be the man that spares the stones,
And curst be he that moves my bones."

The Development of his Genius.

The process of the development of the genius of William Shakespeare covers the period from 1588 to 1612. It is during this period that he composed all his great works. His works have been divided into four distinct periods.

The First Period probably lasted from 1589 to 1594 (?). This period Shakespeare spent in the literary workshop serving his dramatic apprenticeship. All his work in that time bears the impress of youth. He was looking round with the keen eye and kindly heart of youth on the affairs of men. Even in his early days Shakespeare showed a facility of expression; but his verse, then, was not a very happy vehicle of expression. The period was also the lyrical period. He showed himself a keen observer of nature, going into raptures over the glorious forms of physical and material beauty. He found himself rapt in the ecstatic environment of youthful love in *Romeo* and *Juliet* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

In this period were written the following:

Love's Labours Lost, The Comedy of Errors, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Romeo and Juliet, Richard II, Henry VI and Richard III.

The Second Period lasting till 1601, was the summer-time of his literary life. It was a sweet and joyful time, lit by a warm sunshine of gladness. Shakespeare had now left the realm of fancy; and his imagination laid hold of real life. The Shakespeare of the Second Period was a splendid all-perceiving man. He tried to include within his comprehensive vision the world in relation to the men in it. So he began to deal with the matter of history. "The compression of the large and rough matter of history into dramatic form demaned vigorous exercise of the plastic energy of the imagination; and the circumstances that he was dealing with reality and positive facts of the world, must have served to make clear to Shakespeare that there was sterner stuff of poetry, material more precious—even for purpose of art—in actual life, than could be found in the conceits, and affectations which at times led him astray in his earlier writings.".

The characterisations of the Second Period are great and better than those of the First. There is also a lift in the women characters. Portia in the *Marchant of Venice* is endowed with all the virtues of womanhood and marks the beginning of that succession of beautiful types of splendid womanhood. Ophelia, Isabella, Desdemona, and Cordelia. All sorts of men are placed before us. There are kings and nobles, soldiers and statesmen, traitors and courtiers, in the historical plays; citizen life is well depicted in the *Merchant of Venice*, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. "The Second Period is an advance in every way on all that has gone before in characterisation, in power, in knowledge, in the greater attention to contemporary characters, in wit, in wisdom, in political insight, in the use of contrast, in pathos, in the presentation of suffering, in the heigher type of men and women portrayed."

The following works cover this period:

King John, The Merchant of Venice, The Taming of the Shrew, Henry IV, Henry V, The Merry Wives of Windsor, Much Ado About Nothing, As You Like It, Twelfth Night, All's Well that Ends Well, Sonnets.

The Third Period opened in 1601. It was the period of the great comedies and the great tragedies. The plays of this time are full of bitterness and show a touch of world-weariness. It was a period of winter gloom. During this period his son died, and his father died, probably soon after Shakespeare had written his *Twelfth Night*. The poet seemed to have lost all interest in mirth and love, in pomp and splendour. He now dived into the depths of the human heart, and came to know of sorrow and disappointments. A "mass of evil, of sacrifice of good to ill, of triumph of the base over the noble,"—this is what the Third Period represents. Its redeeming features are to be sought for in the characters of Isabella, with her saintliness and purity; Cordelia, with her truth and daughter's love; and Volumnia, with her devotion to honour and her

country. Yet it is true to say that the Shakespeare of the last two periods had undergone a change. One is apt to wonder, was this change one of artist only, or was it one man too?

Julius Caesar, Hamlet, Measure for Measure, Troilus and Cressida Othello. Macbeth, King Lear, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus, and Timon of Athens are the plays written during the period, which lasted till 1608.

The Fourth Period, which started in 1608 and lasted till 1613, marked another change in his personal as well as dramatic life. The spiritual crisis of the last period was over. At last a ray of sub-shine brightened the last works of Shakespeare. "The ill-boding times of storm are over; we are now as it were, in a golden morning, when the breezes have swept away the clouds of night;.... These are the new days, with new lessons. They are full of peace and calm, mercy and forgiveness, reunion and reconciliation." In the Fourth Period plays we again find ourselves enjoying the simple life of nature. There is no place for the bitter scepticism of the last period. In many ways there seems to be a return to the First Period ; but here the materials are better handled, the stand-point is more philosophic, and the characterisation is deeper. It seems that Shakespeare had gone deep into the problems of life, and had come forth wise, large-hearted and calmsouled. He had at last, learnt to recognise human frailty, and the need of fortitude and *serenity*.

In this period, which ended in 1613, may be placed the following plays:

Pericles. The Tempest, Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale, Henry VIII.

The following are the works of Shakespeare arranged in chronological order by Morton Luce:

	Written (about)	*Printed*
Henry VI Part I	1590	1623
Titus Andronicus	,,	1600
The Comedy of Errors	1591	1623
Love's Labours Lost	,,	1598
Henry VI, Part II	1592	1623
Henry VI, Part III	,,	,,
The Two Gentlemen of Verona	,,	,,
Venus and Adonis	1593	1593
Richard III	,,	1597
The Rape of Lucrece	1594	1594
Sonnets (about)	,,	1609
Richard II	,,	1597
A Midsummer Night's Dream	,,	1600
Romeo and Juliet	1595	1597
All's Well that Ends Well	1595	1623
King John	1596	,,
The Taming of the Shrew	,,	,,
The Merchant ot Venice	,,	1600
Henry IV, Part I	1597	1598

	Written (about)	Printed
Henry IV, Part II	1597	1600
The Merry Wives of Windsor	1598	1602
Henry V	1599	1600
Much Ado About Nothing	,,	,,
As You Like It	1600	1623
Twelfth Night	,,	,,
Julius Caesar	1601	,,
Hamlet	1602	1603-4
Troilus and Cressida	1603	1609
Measure for Measure	1604	1623
Othello	,,	1622
King Lear	1605	1608
Timon of Athens	1606	1623
Macbeth	,,	,,
Pericles	1607	1609
Antony and Cleopatra	1608	1623
Coriolanus	1609	,,
Cymbeline	1609	1623
The Winter's Tale	1610	,,
The Tempest	1611	,,
Henry VIII	1612	,,

3. Classification of the Plays in the Folio of 1623.

Histories.

Henry VI.	Richard III.
King John.	Henry IV.
Henry V.	Henry VIII.

Tragedies.

Titus Andronicus.	Romeo and Juliet.
Julius Caesar.	Hamlet.
Othello.	King Lear.
Macbeth.	Antony and Cleopatra.
Coriolanus	Pericles
Cymbeline.	

Comedies.

Love's Labours Lost.	Comedy of Errors.
Two Gentlemen of Verona.	A Midsummer Night's Dream.
Merchant of Venice.	Merry Wives of Windsor.
Much Ado About Nothing.	Twelfth Night.
As You Like It.	Troilus and Cressida.
Measure for Measure.	Tempest.
Winter's Tale.	

4. The Age of Shakespeare.

The Spirit of the Times.—The epoch that produced William Shakespeare was one of glory and triumph in the life and literature of the English people. It is popularly known as the Elizabethan Age: a more descriptive title would be the English Reniassance. If Chaucer may be allowed a place by himself, this is the second great period

of poetry in England, and the first of her drama and prose. Approximately it covers the years that lie between the birth of Shakespeare and the death of Milton; that is to say between 1580 and 1660.

The New Learning of the Renaissance had come to England. It had opened to the questing gaze of men a world of infinite hope and activities. Bacon had taken all knowledge to be his province, and he represented the spirit of the age. In every aspect of life new ideas were flowing in and struggling with the old. "Men were tempted once more to believe that by eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge they would become as Gods." Shakespeare's rhapsody on the "god-like reach of man" in Hamlet clearly reflects the spirit of the times.

"What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculties, in form, and moving! how express and admirable in action! how like an angel in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals."

Yet Marlowe was the best exponent of the age and its aspirations, as embodied in *Faustus and Tamburlaine*.

The Spirit of Adventure.—It was an age of great maritime enterprise. Indomitable curiosity drove men to travel not only in Europe, but also far into regions beyond. Voyages were undertaken not merely by Drake and Hawkins, but by private persons also. Travelling entailed a lot of risk; but the spirit of adventure welcomed such risks. A certain section was crazy for travelling in Italy. Jaques in *As You Like It*, is probably a caricature of the much travelled and Italianate youth of the age. A visit to Italy, though usually nothing came of it, was regarded as an essential part of education. The Elizabethan audience was always anxious to hear of the great world outside; it loved the traveller as Desdemona loved the Moor, for the dangers through which he had passed.

Travel even by land had its dangers. The roads were infested by thieves and highway robbers. The risks of a sea voyage are well described in *The Tempest*, the highway robbery in *Henry IV, Part I*, at Gadshill is quite representative of the dangers of travel by land. The police of the age were notoriously inefficient. Parson Harrison describes the situation thus:

'No man travelleth by the way without his sword, or some weapons with us. Seldom also are wayfaring men robbed without the consent of the Chamberlain, tapster or ostler where they bait and lie; who feeling at their alighting whether their capcases or budgets be of and weight or not, by taking them down from their saddles, or otherwise see their store in drawing of their purses, do by and by give intimation to some one or other, ... whether the prey be worth the following or no'.

Sports. Knowledge in those days was not pursued for the sake of knowledge. It was regarded as a means to an end. The mere scholar was always a butt of ridicule. The age had better regard for men of action. Love of gardens and field sports merely represented an aspect of the physical zest of the age. Hunting and hawking must have been quite common even among the poor. The

innumerable technical terms that Shakespeare used in his plays must have been understood by the average play-goer. In deed, "to the Elizabethans, physcial education was no less important than intellectual exercise."

Elizabethan music was as remarkable and as famous in its own days as Elizabethan literature. There are frequent references to music in the plays of Shakespeare. Among the popular sports may be mentioned cock-fighting and bear baiting. We are told that if any town had the misfortune to lose its bear through illness the church wardens often sold their great Bible in order to buy another bear. Macbeth, when he faces the army of Malcolm' cries,

"They have tied me to the stake. I cannot fly
But bear-like I must fight the course."

Much attention was paid to Physical perfection. The fame of Sir Philip Sidney rested both on his physical and intellectual perfection. Spenser says of Sidney:

"In wrestling nimble, and in running swift:
In shooting steddie, and in swimming strong.
Well made to strike, to throw, to leape, to lift
And all the sports the shepherds are among.

The queen liked to be surrounded by men and graceful presence and proper bearing. All her favourites were handsome looking men. "This regard," as Lambourne and Harrison say, for bodily perfection, 'the delight of the eye and the pride of life,' is strikingly revealed in the dress of the age."

Dress And Luxury—The Elizabethans were very extravagantly dressed. It may be said that they overdressed themselves. Money was lavishly spent on rich clothes and jewels. "Men and women alike, as their portraits show, wore jewels wherever room could be found to display them round their necks, in their ears, on their fingers and thumbs, and on their wrists and on the rosettes of their shoes." The Queen herself encourged such extravagances and dis plays. Indeed the clothes were a passport to her favour. England was passing through prosperous times, and the increased wealth was squandered through pomp and pageantry, and on luxury and feasts. The old fashioned people deplored this spirit, and contemporary literature is full of satirical references to this point. Falconbridge, the young baron of England, is thus described by Portia in *The Merchant of Venice.*

"How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round house in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behaviour everywhere."

The Elizabethans practically spent all their fortune on dress. Estates were sold or improverished to purchase rich costumes. Ben Jonson in his *Every Man Out of His Humour* gives us a picture of a fop of the day and says, "Twere good you turned four or five hundred acres of your best land into two or three trunks of apparel."

Dress was not, however, the only item of expenditure. New houses of distinctive charm sprang up all over the land. Contemporary writes speak of the comforts and conveniences of these

houses, "their glazed windows, their costly furniture, their tapestry, fine linen, and plate." The Elizabethans were also fond of rich food and wine. New and "strange herbs, and fruits" were brought over from the Indies and other parts of the world. The number and variety of dishes were numerous. It is not surprising, therefore, that people, going to dinner at eleven in the morning, sat at it till two or three in the afternoon. With many it was rather difficult to go to evening prayers and return in time for supper, which was between five and six in the evening.

Religion and Superstition.—The sovereign in Elizabethan England was regarded almost as a divinity. Many people in Shakespeare bear witness to this feeling. Queen Elizabeth believed in a common form of worship as that would help to strengthen the state. Her personal religious convictions were tolerant. The Romanists were persecuted because they refused to regard the Queen as the head of the English Church: she disliked the Puritans because "they opposed individual opinion to the authority of the Church of which she was the head. In a sense it was an epoch of unbelief. The spirit of the Renaissance broke down the limits set upon the heart and the imagination by the religious system of the Middle Ages. Old beliefs and old traditions were giving way to newer ideals of life. Yet it was an epoch of belief too. The people, especially those, who professed the reformed creed had strong religious convictions. It is no wonder that they were ready to die for their faith. The Puritans stood for freedom of the individual conscience, and for a simpler and sincerer form of worship. In this they represented the ture spirit of the Renaissance."

The great majority of the people in the times of Shakespeare believed in witchcraft and superstition. Statutes against witches were passed in the very year of Shakespeare's birth. They were re-enacted with heavier penalties in the first year of James I. Gipsy fortune-tellers were punished with death. Omens and portents were sought for everywhere. Shakespeare's plays are full of references to those beliefs. The public loved representations of ghosts and spirits. We have a fine scene of a Witch's Sunday in *Macbeth;* in this play we have a good example of the influence that the witches were supposed to be able to exert.

The condition of the masses. We have so far directed our attention to the higher classes of society. We must now describe the conditions in which the masses lived. It is much more difficult to relate their story. The little that we know from contemporary literature tells us that their lot was not an enviable one. The rich enjoyed themselves at the expense of the poor. Harrison, a parish priest, points out that "the gentility commonely provide themselves sufficiently of wheat for their own tables, whilst their house hold and poor neighbours in some shires are forced to content themselves with rye, barley, yea and in times of dearth, many with bread made either of beans, peas or oats, or of all together and some acorns among." The new landlords, who were mostly traders and lawyers, were very hard upon their tenants. The three great evils of the age from which the common people suffered most were (a) the raising of the

rents; (b) the dispossessing of the small-holder; (c) the greediness of the professional money-lenders. Then, as a result of rural unemployment the number of vagrants, sturdy beggars, thieves, and heighwaymen increased. The unemployed left the villages, and there was an overgrowth of the towns, especially London. It was to London that drifted all the soldiers and sailors disbanded from the wars, refugees and outlaws from abroad, all armed with weapons of some sorts. Frequent brawls in the streets of London, like those of the Capulets and Montagues, were nothing unusual.

The crowded and dirty city was often swept with epidemies. Two plagues occurred in Shakespeare's life time. People died early. Shakespeare died at the age of fifty-two, and yet he had outlived most of his numerous brothers and sisters "Consumption was almost as common as it is now; small-pox, of course far more common and fatal; ague, now hardly known outside the topics, was endemic in all the low-lying areas; to be cut for the stone was what every middle aged man might look forward to unless like Montaigne, he feared the disease less than the doctor." Medical science was in an elementary stage. Blood-letting and purging were the usual remedies. People believed in the efficacy of magic spells and charms.

The rigour of the penal code added to the sufferings of the masses. The Elizabethan system was really brutal. "Whippings, hangings, burnings, disembowellings, and mutilations were as common and apparently as attractive as bear-baiting and cockfights. Carcases on gibbets, traitors' heads on spikes, living felons with mutilated hands and cars must have made the counterfeit horrors of *Titus Andronicus* more amusing than painful to the average playgoer. Whipping was the mildest of punishments on shipboard it seems to have been a superstition that to avert misfortune the ship-boys should be regularly whipped whether or not they deserved it, a sacrifice to the malignant fates. Children were unmercifully beaten alike by their parents and teachers. . . . . Women and girls were flogged in public; beggars, for example, were whipped out of any village they might enter."

The plays of Shakespeare were written for an audience brought up in an age of incongruities. Indeed, we can do no better than follow Lambourne and Harrison, and quote the following as the best summing up of the age of Shakespeare:

"It was the best of time, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of unbelief, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair. . .. "

5. The Elizabethan Stage and Audience. Their Influence on Shakespeare.

The conditions of Shakespeare's theatre affected him in two ways (1) by the necessities and restrictions of the physical formation of the theatre (2) by the tastes of his audience.

(*a*) *The shape of the theatre; etc.*

Description

The stage in the Elizabethan theatre was a raised bare platfrom, projecting to some distance into the audience. It was surrounded on all sides by the audience and the players were seen from many points of view. The natural effect was that actors had to aim at a statuesque rather than pictorial effect. The central part of the theatre, into which the stage protruded, was unroofed. The plays were given by day-light. There was no painted scenery or curtain. At the back of the stage was a wall, with decorative columns and architecture, and there was one large door immediately in the middle of the wall and a smaller door on the other side. This wooden erection served many purposes. It was Juliet's tomb and the canopy of Dua demona's bed, and the hovel where poor Tom in *Lear* is found taking refuge from the storm. The top of the structure was used as occasion demanded for battlements, or for the balcony in *Romeo and Juliet* or for the window in Shylock's house or Cleopatra's monument. There were no female actors and the parts of women were played by boys.

Elizabethan stage favourable for poetic drama

It might seem to us that the production in such a stage ought to be very dull. But it is a mistake to suppose so. For the flourishing of poetic drama, the conditions of the Elizabethan stage are the most favourable. The effects of poetic imagination are wrought largely by suggestion. A stage with scenery will only be a distraction, where as a stage poorly furnished by sparing the irrelevant distraction actually helps poetry to do its work. In this connection we must also remember that Elizabethans were better lovers of poetry than we and that they had a more potent imagination. The boy-players also helped the poetic drama. Shakespeare has had more loss than gain by the genius of the latter day actresses, for their realism and robust emotion often hinder the poetic value of the author's conception. The boys on the other hand rendered Shakespeare with such a clarity and simplicity that they formed a good transparent medium for the author's wit and pathos.

Lack of scenery' its effects. Rapid. dialogue, poetic suggestions.

The Elizabethan stage gave every opportunity for rapid action. Several scenes could follow quickly after each other, without a single break in the continuity of the play. In fact the acting of a Shakespearean play did not take more than two hours. We know this from Shakespeare's own reference to the "two hours traffic of our stage." Moreover the absence of movable scenery on the stage made it necessary for Shakespeare to supply a large amount of vivid and natural description, in order to complete the illusion of locality. In Act I Sc. iv of *Hamlet* Shakespeare wishes the audience to feel that the action is taking place on the battlements of the castle at dead of night. So Hamlet's words commence by creating this impression, when he says:

> The air bites very shrewdly :
> It is very cold.

and then asks:

> What hour now ?

To which Horatio replies

I thinks it lacks of twelve.

By these subtle suggestion, the impression is fixed in the minds of the audience that the scene is a cold night on the battlements of the castle, and that it is mid-night.

No drop curtain. The fact that there was no drop curtain to close a scene made it necessary for Shakespeare to clear the stage in the natural process of the action. At the conclusion of Act III sc. vi of *Hamlet* the body of Polonius has to be disposed of. The modern producer would allow the curtain to fall, showing the body still lying on the stage. As an intimation to the audience that a scene was closed Shakespeare would often end the scene by a riming, tag, e.g.

"The play's the thing.
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king."

The tastes of the audience. The audience to which Shakespeare appealed was a boisteous crowd—full-blooded, warm-hearted, fond of extremes and improbabilities. It loved all sorts of crude horrors. It loved to see ghosts, monsters and super-natural beings. It loved to see madness represented on the stage. It loved noise, rant, mere bawdry, songs, ballads, jokes, clownage in general, and fighting. All these Shakespeare gave his audience in plenty and the result is that his plays appear to be a strange mixture of crudeness and beauty. This fact is to be explained mainly by the tastes of his audience.

6. Shakespeare's Comedies.

Comedy—Definition and Characteristics—'Comedy' is a word rather difficult to define. Moreover definitions are usually unsatisfactory. Any how the most general notion is that a comedy is a play that does not end sadly. Such a definition is unsatisfactory. It does seldom apply to the modern drama, and Shakespeare himself does not keep true to it always. According to Aristotle 'comedy' represents the imperfections of human nature. We are given an opportunity, as it were, to laugh at our own follies. Even this definition does not suit Shakespeare's comedies. To the moderns there is an intellectual appeal of comedy, and it is essentially satiric in spirit. Shakespeare, however, does not seem to expose anybody; he simply gives us pen-pictures.

Baker, in his *Development of Shakespeare* says: "The comic in general as distinguished from the tragic is a matter of the point of view from which the dramatist looks at his material and the emphasis he gives it." This seems very reasonable. The Trial Scene in *The Merchant of Venice*, as Baker points out, is tragic or comic according as we look at it through Shylock's eyes or Gratiano's. Another reasonable way of distinguishing between tragedy and comedy is by recognising the difference in the kind of emotional appeal. The comedy seems to appeal to our sense of superiority, and we are pleased. In the tragedy we sympathise and identify ourselves with the hero and are pained. Ludwig Lewiston

says, "The pleasure that men take in comedy arises from their feeling of superiority to the persons involved in the comic action."

Before Shakespeare, the dramatists were more interested in the comedy of manners and the farcial comedy, dealing with farcial episodes. More attention was paid to mere puts than actual wit. In the pre-Shakespearean comedy, comic episodes were usually exaggerated. Farce, as opposed to wit and humour was the more important element in it. Pre-Shakespearean comedy may be called 'low comedy' Shakespeare in his earlier comedies, like *Love's Labours Lost*, *The Comedy of Errors or The Merry Wives of Windsor*, tended towards the farcial. But in his later plays he rose the supreme height of 'high comedy.' John Lyly was the first to move in the way of 'high comedy.' His dialogue was usually witty and brilliant. Yet it was left to Shakespeare to perfect the type.

Shakespearean Comedy. The following extract gives a clear idea of the chief characteristics of Shakespeare's romantic comedie.

"To conceive Shakespearean comedy aright, we must disconnect the word comedy from the associations derived from the adjectives 'comic and 'comical'; we must recognise the fact that though laughter is one of its incidents, laughter is not its end. Shakespeare's comedy includes the intellectual delight of chasing down folly, but this is not its main purpose.

"The essentials of a Shakespearean comedy at its best are a delightful story, conducted in some romantic region by, gracious, and gallant persons thwarted or aided by the mirthful god, circumstance, and arriving at a fortunate issue. While Shakespeare in comedy is niggard of punishment, he is liberal in rewards. And since almost all stories he chooses for his comic stage are stories of love and lovers, what grand reward can be reserved for the fifth act so fitting as the reward of love. In Shakespearean comedy we may reckon upon a marriage, or more marriages than one, in act or in immediate prospect before the curtain closes; or if not a marriage (for the lovers may be wedded lovers at the opening) then, after division or separation of husband and wife, what we may call at a remarriage, with misunderstandings cleared up and faults forgiven.

"Between the first scene and the last, the path of comedy is beset with obstacle; and dangers, past which love must find a way—the course of true love never did run smooth. These may be either internal—some difficulty arising from character—or external difference of blood or of rank, the choice of friends, slanderous tongues, rival passions, the spit of fortune. The resolution of the difficulty must be of corresponding kind; temper or rash determination must yield to the predominance of love, or the external difficulties must be removed by well directed effort, or a happy turn of events. Love has on its side gallantry and resource, loyalty and valour; the good powers of nature and the magic of the moonlit faery wood; and so over the mountains and over the waves, love at last finds out a way.

"Love being its central theme laughter cannot be its principal end, and cruel or harsh laughter is almost necessarily ruled out.

But the laughter of joy rings in the earlier and middle comedies, and a smile, beautiful in its wisdom and serenity, illuminates the comedies of the closing of periods. If satire is present, it is only on rare occasions a satire of manners. It deals rather with something universal—a satire of the fatuity of self-love, of the powers of self-deception; or it is a genial mockery of the ineptitude of brianless self-importance or the languid lover's amorous endeavours.

The *dramatis personae* form a large and varied population, ranging in social rank from the King to the tinker and the bellows mender. It takes all sorts of characters to make Shakespeare's world. All sorts and conditions of human mortals occupy the secne; while on this side enters Caliban, bearing his burden of logs and Ariel flies over head upon the bat's back, on the other pine the offended king of fairy-land frowns upon Titania and claims her pretty Eastern minion.

"The characters are ordinarily ranged with an excellent effect or dramatic perspective, in three groups or divisions. The lovers and their immediate friends and rivals occupy the middle plane. Above them are persons of influence or authority by virtue of age or rank, on whom in some measure the fortunes of the lovers depend. Below them are the humble aiders abettors of their designs, or subordinate figures lightly attached to the central action; yet playing into the hands of benevolent chance, and always ready to diversify the scene, to enliven the stage, to fill an interval with glittering word play or unconscious humour, to save romance from shrill intensity or too aerial ascension by the contact of reality. . . ."

7. Date of Composition

External evidence con fix with cansiderable certainty the date of campostion of 'Much Ado'.

External Evidence.

Entry in the Stationers' Register makes it clear that the play was written before August 1600 hut bow long before cannot be exactly determined.

The title-page of the Quarto shows that it was printed in 1600. This further tells us that the play had been 'sundry time publicly acted by the Right Honourable, the Lord Chamberlain's servants' before it was printed. Hence it is definite that the play was written some time before August 1600.

"Much Ado" is not included in Six comedies and Six tragedies of Shakespeare's plays given by Frances Meres in his work Palladis Tamia, Wit's Treasury, published in the autumn of 1598. Have the play could not have been written before 1598 (because it is not mentioned by Meres). Naturally the play must have been composed between the years 1598 and 1600.

Evidence partly external and partly internal.

There is practically no evidence, consisting of allusions to contemperary events. Commentators have, however read as many as five such allusions into the speeches and passages of this play.

(*i*) In Act I. Sc. I lines 7-8 there is a reference to Essex's Irish

Campaign of 1599. Essex lost three-fourth of his men through sickness and desertion, but the text of the play says bringing back home 'full numbers.'

(*ii*) In Act. I, Sc. I, line 41, Beatrice says in connection with Don Pedro's wars that these were 'musty victuals'. Some critics connect this to Essex's Irish Campaign (1599), as these were complaints about the bad quality of the provisions supplied to the English Army in Ireland. But this is not convincing, first because the scene of 'the wars', referred to in Bandello's *Novella* (the source of this play) is laid in Messina and not Ireland, *Secondly* became there is no authority for the charge of supply of 'musty victuals' in the Irish Campaign, *thirdly*, became Shakespeare has already made a complimentary reference to this campaign in "Henry V" and lastly because Shakespare was too good a friend of Essex's to have a fling at him.

(*iii*) In the following lines, another reference to a contemporary political event viz, Essex's rebellion is pointed out by critics.

'Like favourites
Made proud by princes, that advance their pride,
Against that power that bried it:

Act III, Sc. I lines 11-13

But the date of the rebellion, August 26th, 1600, makes this reference an impossiblity, because "Much Ado" was submitted for registration at the Statiners Hall *later* than August 4th or 23rd, 1600. This passage, therefore, is applicable to Cecil and Raleigh rather to Essex.

Fleay (a Shakespearian critic) in support of his date of 1597-98 for the play (putting the original play at 1590) argues that Kemp, who played the roll of Dogberry, left the Lord Chamberlain's men in 1599, when they moved from the curtain to the globe.

But this is a mere guess. Beside this, it is clear from the *Return from Parnassus* that Kemp was still with the Lord Chamberlain's men in 1601. The mention of Kemp's name in the place of Dogberry in the Quarto of 1600 is also a proof that he was with Shakespeare's Company in 1600.

Internal Evidence

The metre, style, diction, tone and characterization—the method of workmanship are all internal evidence of the play, which confirm that the date arrived at by external evidence is correct. All of these point to the 'middle period' of Shakespearse's dramatic production. The period in which *As you like it and Twelfth Night* were created. Vocabulary links the play to "Henry IV." Two Third of the 'middle period' plays are in prose. Much Ado About Nothing is also Two-Third in prose as *As you like it.* From the versification point of view it comes somewhere between Richard II and Hamlet. In point of structure this play represents the maturity of Shakespeare's comic art.

The diction, the proportion of prose and verse, the quality of the blank verse, the use of rhyme and the various material tests

all point to the conclusion that the play was composed in the latter part of 1599.

8. Sources of the Play.

Shakespeare was not originator of plots of his plays. He picked his tales from books well known in the Elizabethan period and moulded them to finer forms. He least cared for the originality of plot and incident. He takes for granted that audiance or the reader knows his plays from the very beginning. The books that gave him the dramatic plots often were the Italian *novelle* in English translations-Holinshed's *Chronicles* and Sir Thomas North's translation of *Plutarches Lives*, Shakespeare was not a plagiarist. He was master in magically transforming the materials that he borrowed. It is hard fact, that sometimes he did not hesitate in following closely and even slavishly his sources. 'The soul of originality consists in something far deeper and more essential than any more sorting or linking of incidents so as to form an attractive story. On the vital workings of nature in the development of individual character, and not on anything so superficial or mechanical as a mere framework of incident, depends the real life of the play.' A marvellous mutual adaptation of action and character, making the one inwardly and vitally related to the other, is the secret of his great dramatic achievement. The source of action was borrowed; but there was no borrowing in the characterisation. The figures in the original stories (Shakespeare's sources) were lifeless shadows having neither motive nor meaning. They were unreal and their actions arbitrary. The supreme qualities of Shakespeare's plays are entirely his, e.g., characterization, plot-construction, humour, pathos, philosophy, knowledge of life, imagination and all the rest of it.

Hudson says, *Much Ado* is a complication of *three different actions* determined by the three groups of strongly contracted characters.' Thus the play may be divided into three stories:

(1) The serious and almost tragic story of Hero and Claudio which constitutes the main plot.

(2) The purely comic story of Beatrice and Benedick.

(3) The story of Dogberry, Verges and the Watch presenting the element of board comedy, which helps the solution of the main plot.

There is a great parallelism between the Hero-Claudio story and the story of Timbreodi Cardona by the Italian story-writter Bandello who gove in his work *Novelle* published in 1554. This is certainly the main source. Not only the incidents are closely similar, even the names and setting are common to both. How Shakespeare came to know of this Italian publication *Novelle*; is a mere speculation. He might have read Bandello's story in some English translation of *Novelle*, or in the original Italian or merely heard it from somebody.

Analysis of difference between Much Ado and Bandello's story:

(*i*) In Bendello's story the Prince is King Piero d'Aragona

who delivered Sicily from the French yoke, which Shakespeare is si'ent on the question of Don Pedro's identity and the character of the war which is referred to so much in the opening scenes.

(*ii*) In Shakespeare's play Don John's suggestion of Hero's inferiority of birth is difficulty in the way of her marriage with Claudio. As well as this marriage is a public disgrace as the daughter of Leonato, who is the Governor of Messina going to be wedded to a stranger like Claudio. In Bandello's story. Leonato is a private, impoverished gentleman of good birth in the city, and the accusation of the heroine is made not in public but made privately to her family through a messenger.

(*iii*) In Shakespeare's play Don John's villainy is motiveless, while in Bandello's Novelle Don Girondo is the Hero's jealous rival in love.

(*iv*) In Bandello the Hero, except for his one great lapse, is a gentleman, while in the play he is not a gentleman but a vulgar fellow.

(*v*) In the story, the heroine has a loving father and mother but in the play, she has no mother, and the father is a credulous old fool.

(*vi*) Margaret who is disguised as Hero in the play has no counterpart in Bendello but is inspired by Ariosto's *Dalinda*.

(*vii*) Shakespeare uses the same agent Borachio for deceiving Claudio twice but Bandello employs two different men on two different occasions.

(*viii*) In Bandello the villain repents, confesses and is pardoned but in the play Don John is an unredeemed villain till the last.

Belleforest's Histories Tragiques.

A very free and 'enriched' translation and adaptation of Bandello's story was made by Belleforest in French in his Histories Tragiques in 1582 which Shakespeare might or might not have read. Belleforest introduces much sentimental moralising and some dramatic touches which Shakespeare has not utilised. Where there are differences in detail (there being no difference in vital incidents or action), Shakespeare follows Bendello rather than Belleforest. So Furness and many other think that Shakespeare owes nothing to Belleforest.

The story of Ariodante and Genevra in Books iv, vi, in Ariosto's Orlando Furioso.

Ariosto's poem was translated in English by Sir John Harrington in 1591, and another English version of the tale by Peter Beverley was entered on the Stationers' Register in 1565-66. Shakespeare may or may not have been acquainted with Ariosto's version of the Hero-Claudio story. They are so many important points of difference that it is unlikely that Shakespeare should have been indebted directly to Ariosto or his English translators for the story. *The only point in common* is the appearance at the window of a lady inwaiting (Dalinda—Margaret) disguised as her mistress (Genevra—

Hero) while the (Ariodante—Claudia) is concealed in the garden—an incident (personating of Hero) which may have had a place in the gossip of Shakespeare's time. That the story had also been dramatised as shown by an entry in the Accounts of the Court Revels (1581—83) about a performance of the play of Ariodante and Genevra by Mr. Mulcaster's Children.

Spenser's Faerie Queene.

Another version of the Hero-Claudio story is given by Spenser in Book II, Canto IV, of the Faerie Queene, published in 1590, but here the divergences are even greater. The only point of resemblance is that Spenser makes the lady's supposed paramour 'a groom of base degree, and the villain's motive envy or malice-hints which might have suggested to Shakespeare the characters of Borachio and Don John.

Jacob Ayrer's German Play.

To it Shakespeare probably owes nothing. The German version follows Belleforest rather Bandello and differs from Shakespeare's play both in the management of the plot and in general style and atmosphere. "In the German dramatist Ayrer's *Die Schone Sidea*, founded on Bandello's novel, we have the introduction of a pair of humorous lovers and the discomfiture of the man. The couple are, however, on a far lower and coarser level than Benedick and Beatrice; and, in any case, it is impossible to say whether Shakespeare borrowed from Ayrer or *vice versa ;* whether both drew from a common unknown source ; or whether, finally, the resemblance may have been merely fortuitous." (Boas).

An old play entitled Benedicate and Betteris.

It is not altogether unlikely that Shakespeare used as source of his Beatrice-Benedick story an older play, distinct from the last play 'the matter of Panecia' based on Bendello's novelle. This older play is identified with the *Benedick and Beatteris* which according to the account of the Lord Treasure Stanhope, was presented at the court in the spring of 1613 on the occasion of the marriage of Princess Elizabeth and the Prince Palatine Elector. It is, however, impossible to say definitely whether Benedick and Betteris was a distinet play from Much Ado About Nothing or an alternative title to Shakespeare's play.

9. Summary of the Play.

There lived in the palace at Messina two young ladies, called Hero and Beatrice. Hero was the daughter, and Beatrice the niece of Leonato, the governor of Messina. Beatrice was of a lively temper, and loved to divert her cousin Hero, who was of a more serious disposition, with her gay repartees. Two youngmen of high rank in the army, as they were passing through Messina on their return from a war that had just ended, came to visit Leonato. They were Don Pedro, the prince of Arragon and his friend Claudio, who was a lord of Florence. With them also came the wild and witty Benedick, a lord of Padua. They had been at Messina some time ago and the hospitable governor introduced them to his daughter and his niece as their old friends. Beatrice, when intero-

duced to Benedick, entered into a lively discourse with him : these two sharp wits had never met before without keeping up a perfect war of raillery between them. Seeing Don Pedro take delight in Benedick's conversation, Beatrice called him the prince's 'jester,' and he in turn called her 'my dear lady Disdain' Don Pedro suggested to Leonato that Beatrice might marry Benedick. Don Pedro later on found out that Claudio was speaking very highly of Hero's charms and this made him project their marriage. Leonato agreed to this perposal. Claudio assisted by his friend Don Pedro, proposed to Leonato to fix an early day for the celebration of his marriage with Hero.

But some time must lapse before this marriage might take place. In order to pass this time agreeably the prince proposed, as a kind of merry pastime, that they should invent some artful scheme to make Benedick and Beartice fall in love with each other. Claudio, Leonato and even Hero mightily relished this project. The device was that they should make Benedick believe that Beatrice was in love with him and that proposed Hero should make Beatrice believe that Benedick was in love with her. The prince, Leonato and Claudio began their operations at first. Once the prince told them within Benedick's earshot that Beatrice was in love with Benedick, so much so that she would certainly die of grief, if he could not be brought to love her. The prince proposed that Benedick must be told all this. Benedick heard all this with great eagerness, and a new world suddenly burst upon him. Beatrice now approached him and said with her usual tartness. "Against my were I am sent to bid you came in to dinner." There were two or three rude speeches, whereupon Benedick thought that these were a mere affectation of her concealed love.

Now Hero sent for Ursula and Margaret, two gentlewomen who attended upon her. Margaret was asked to entice Beatrice into a pleasant arbour. This she agreed to do by all means. Then with Ursula, Hero came into the arbour and told her that she would be talking about Benedick's great love for Beatrice. Hero then told her that she was to be married to Claudio the next day. Beatrice listened with agreeable surprise to this conversation between Ursula and Hero about Benedick's great love for her. The change upon her mind was quick : Beatrice promised to love Benedick' taming her wild heart to this loving hand. Thus Benedick and Beatrice were cheated into mutual liking by the merry artifice of the good-natured prince. But unfortunately a tragic turn took place on the next day which was to have been Hero's wedding day.

Don John, a half-brother of Don Pedro, was a melancholy and discontented villain. Heated his brother and Claudio and determined to frustrate Claudio's marriage with Hero, only for the pleasure of making Claudio and the prince unhappy. In order to effect this wickness, Don John employed one Borachio, a man as bad as himself, whom he offered a great reward. Don John thus prevailed upon Borachio to make (Margaret Hero's attendant) promise to talk with him from Hero's chamber-window that night after Hero was

leep and also to dress herself in Hero's clothes in order that audio might be deceived into the belief that it was Hero who had en making love to another man after her troth-plight. Don John so gave it out to Don Pedro and Claudio that Hero was an nprudent lady and that she talked with men from her chamber-ndow at midnight. By way of convincing Claudio of the truth of s statement, he brought them near Hero's chamber that night. ney saw Borachio standing under the window and Margaret looking it of Hero's window and speaking to Borachio. Margaret being ressed in the same clothes they had seen Hero wear, the prince and laudio believed it was the lady Hero herself. At this ugly dis-overy Claudio's love for innocent Hero was at once converted into atred and he resolved to expose her in the church the next day. Vhen the cruel but false exposure was made the mortification of lero and her father knew no bounds, and the poor girl sank down a fainting fit, to all appearance dead. The prince and Claudio ft the church without staying to see if Hero would recover. eonato believed in the story, but Beatrice believed in nothing of hat she had heard spoken against her. Moreover, the ancient riar, well-versed in human nature as he was, discarded altogether ie story of Hero's guilt. There is some strange misunderstanding, id the friar, who advised Leonato that he should report the Hero as dead, as according to his opinion 'this report of her death shall iange slander into pity—when Claudio would hear of her death, ie idea of her life would sweetly creep into his imagination. enedick too, promised not to reveal this secret to his friends.

Beatrice was extemely sorry for her wronged cousin and as she wore her mighty love for Benedick, they made a mutual compact save Hero from the base calumny that had been laid at her door. eatrice proposed that Claudio must be killed, but Benedick ourned this idea altogether. "Think you, on your soul, that laudio has wronged Hero?" asked Benedick. Beartice replied in ie affirmative. Now bold Benedick agreed to challenge Claudio the cause of Hero and even fight with his friend. Leonato, too, as challenging the prince and Claudio to answer with their swords ie injury they had done his child who, he affirmed, had died of rief. But they dissuaded the old man, when Benedick stepped in nd similarly challenged Claudio.

Now a sudden turn of events took place. While the prince and laudio were yet talking of the challenge of Benedick, a magistrate rought Borachio as a prisoner before the prince. Borachio had een overheard talking with one of his companions of the mischief e had been employed by Don John to do. Borachio made a clean reast of everything and the doubt was completely removed by the ight of Don John from Messina, as the latter was anxious to avoid he just anger of his brother. Claudio now bewailed his lot for eing instumental in causing the death of his innocent betrothed. le implored forgiveness of the man Leonato, who took this pportunity of enjoining upon Claudio a penance, namely, he must narry the next morning a cousin of Hero's in person very like lero herself. Claudio could not but accept this, though it sent a

pang into his heart. The next morning Don Pedro accompanied Claudio to the church, where the good friar, Leonato and Hero were already assembled to celebrate a second marriage ceremony. Leonato presented to Claudio his promised bride. Hero wore a mask in order that Claudio might not recognise her. Claudio said to the lady in the mask "Give me you hand, before this holy friar; I am your husband, if you will marry me." 'And when I lived, I was your other wife.' replied this unknow lady. Now Hero revealed herself to Claudio's great wonder. 'Was she not dead ? 'asked he, and Leonato answered, 'She died but while her slander lived.' The Friar promised to explain the thing after the ceremony was at an end. At this stage Benedick, too, wanted to get married with Beatrice. Though Beatrice protested in her usual jocular and bantering vein, the couple now found that they had been tricked into a belief of love, which had never existed and had become lovers in truth by the power of a false jest. So they married each other, like Claudio and Hero. Don John, too, captured in his flight, was brought back to Messina to receive just punishment for his villainy.

10. The Title of the Play.

The meaning of the title is obvious ; the title explains itself. A mere 'nothing' is exaggerated and magnified into great proportions and a tremendous fuss *Much Ado* is made about them. This disproportion, very comic in its effect between the little cause, 'nothing,' and the great effect, the 'much ado' consequent upon it, is humorously illustrated throughout the play. Yet the dramatist makes us to care much more for the 'much ado' than for 'nothing.'

The play indeed is rightly named : we have several Nothings, each in its turn occasioning a deal of stir and perturbation ; yet there is so much of real flavour and spirit stirred out into effect that the littleness of the occasions is scarcely felt or observed, the thoughts being far more drawn to the persons who make the much ado than to the nothing about which the much ado is made." The general view of life which the play presents answers well to the obvious significance of the title. All the persons involved have much ado and make much ado, but all the while this much ado is plainly about nothing" (*Hudson*). "Real life is full of this contrast between things as they are in themselves, as seen by spectators and things as they appear to the partakers. We grieve or fret while such things happen to us while others laugh ; but we laugh like others over the smoke in which all this end" (*Hudson*). *Boas* sums the thing up as follows : "The title is admirably suggestive of the character of the piece which introduces us to a society whose atmosphere is one of perpetual holiday ; where everybody, from high to low, having time enough on hand and to spare, indulges in leisurely circuitous fashions of speech and action, productive on mistakes and misapprehension in short, of much ado which, in the long, always proves to be about nothing."

This sums up the spirit in which the play is conceived and this is the underlying motive of every part of the action. The Hero-Claudio story with its false accusation, hasty repudiation of love and

quick penitance and the theatrical demonstration of grief at the beloved's death are much ado about nothing. The wordy duel of Benedick and Beatrice, their pose eternal enmity when they are really interested in each other and their preference for a state of single life, all began with a flash but end in smoke. Even the Dogberry-Verges story is a variation upon the same theme. Dogberry with his stupendous fatuity, his pathetic wrestling with the intricacies of the law, his padantic absurdities, his curious methods of investigation makes much ado about nothing. "The long-winded charge in which Dogberry instructs his suborinates in their duties is a fresh instance of much ado about nothing, for it amounts to an elaborate exportation to leave every thing undone." The characteristic incident of the play is much ado, arising from misconception of an overhead conference, and ending in nothing at all. This theme, with the forms of incident and of mental tendency that give it effect, is varied in the play with endless or, rather, with exhaustive diversity." (*Lloyd*).

White is of the opinion that a pun is intended by the title on the two words 'nothing' and 'noting' which had the same pronunciation in Elizabethan English—as is indicated in Act II. sc. iii, I, 60. "We call this play *Much Ado About Nothing* ; but it seems clear to me that Shakespeare and his contemporaries called it Much Ado About *Noting* ; a pun being intended between "*nothing*' and '*noting*,' which are then pronounced alike, and upon which pun depends by far the more important significance of the title, *The Play is made up of much ado about nothing, that is watching, observing*. All the personages are constantly engaged in nothing or watching each other. Hero's sufferings came from noting,—by her uncle's servant, by Claudio, and by Don Pedro ; her release and her happiness by the noting of the watch ; and Benedick and Beatrice are brought together by secretly noting of their friend's plot and yet the principal serious event, the accusation of Hero, about which there is so much ado, rests upon nothing." (*R. G. White*).

"The *Much Ado About Nothing* is obviously not conceived merely is an external sense ; it rather denotes the internal contradiction into which all human existence falls, when wholly engrossed with individual, special and accidental interests and relations ; in other words, when man,—treating important matters with playfull levity, recklessly follows his momentary impulses, reelings, and caprices, without asking whether they are justifiable, and whether his resolves are based upon safe foundations. This serious ethical maxim Shakespeare has carefully concealed under the mask of comedy, under the gay picture which represents *human life itself as a 'Much Ado About Nothing.'* (*Ulirci*).

"The title of this play can be brought into logical connection with its contents only by forced casuistry. As in the case of *Twelfth Night*, *As You Like It*, etc, title of the present play is merely one of those humorous devices faintly tinged with the reflex irony with which Shakespeare was habitual to bring his lighter wares to market, Lessing's view that the title should, disclose as little as possible of the contents, has been here even exceeded," (*Oechelhauser*).

Instances of Much Ado About Nothing.

(*a*) In the opening scene of the play, before Benedick appears, we see clearly that Beatrice has an interest in him to which she gives expression by making 'Much Ado' about his non-existent faults. She plies the messenger with satirical questions about Benedick, which only draw forth testimonies to his valour and virtues.

(*b*) The long winded charge in which Dogberry instructs his watch in their duties is an instance of 'Much Ado About Nothing.' His charge means that his subordinates must leave everything undone that they are appointed to do. Fortunately, Seacole and Oatcake arrest Borachio and Conrade, though they misconstrue a whispered phrase and believe that they are on the track of 'One Deformed,' a fictitious personage about whom they make much ado.

(*c*) In the church, we find two crowning instances of Much Ado About Nothing—one, when Claudio with foul calumny casts back the innocent Hero into her father's arms, and another, when Leonato goes into a hysterical lamentation over his daughter's supposed shame.

(*d*) It is another case of Much Ado About Nothing, when the grey-beards, Leonato and Antonio, fail to persuade Claudio to cross swords with them, and the news of Hero's death does not produce the effect intended by the Friar.

(*e*) Claudio's elegy upon Hero's cenotaph is only a case of Much Ado About Nothing, when, on the morrow, she is seen to be no other than Hero. And the critics who express some apprehensions that the unfortunate man who wins Beatrice will not escape a 'predestinate scratched face,' are also supplying an additional example of 'Much Ado About Nothing.'

11. Plot Of The Play

The plot of *Much Ado* is made up of *three actions* 'determined by three groups of strongly contrasted characters (1) the story of Hero and Claudio, almost tragic, which constitutes the main plot, (2) the story of Beatrice and Benedick, at first duellists of sex but at last lovers, engaged in a merry war of words throughout constituting one of the sub-plots but far surpassing in interest and vigour of the main plot.

(3) The broad comedy of the immortal parish constables Dogberry, Verges and the watch, helping the solution of the main plot, *viz*, the exposure of Don John's villainy and the establishment of Hero's innocence, but more than everything, contributing a tremendous amount of fun and farcical humour to the play.

The main plot is capable of further sub-division. It may be resolved into (1) the Proxy wooing story and (2) the unchastity plot, improbable and unconvincing.

"The Benedick-Beatrice scenes serve," as Gervinus says, "to produce a merry counterbalance to the more serious and primary element of the play' while the clumsy exposure of Don John's plot by the stupid constables contributes a comic element to what seems about to end as a tragedy."

Swinburne calls *Much Ado*, Shakespeare's comic masterpiece." In his opinion, there is unquestionably no creation of his hand that for absolute *power of composition*, for faultless balance, and blameless rectitude of design" may compare with this play. Hazlitt strikes a more moderate and so a truer note when he remarks. "Perhaps that middle point of comedy was never more nicely hit, in which the ludicrous blends with the tender, and our follies turning round against themselves in support of our affections, retain nothing but their humanity." Boas calls *Much Ado* 'a brilliant comedy, the most signal illustration of his mastery over the techinque of stage-craft that Shakespeare hath hitherto given to the world.' He says, "Marvellous as had been his manipulation of a highly involved plot in *The Merchant of Venice*, it had consisted in interlacing the theads of strongly contrasted tales, and in creating an organic whole out of superficially discordant elements. But in the present play the yet greater triumph is achieved of producing the most subtle variations upon a single idea so that the comedy may be aptly termed a fugue upon the theme of *Much Ado About Nothing*."

Analysis Of The Plot

About the construction of a Shakespearean comedy, Hudson says, "Like tragedy, comedy deals with a conflict between an individual force (which may be centred in one character, or in a group of characters acting in one) and environing circumstances. In tragedy the individual (one person or a group) is overwhelmed, in comedy the individual triumphs. In comedy,as in tragedy, five stages may be noted in the plot development: (1) the exposition, or introduction (2) the complication, rising action or growth; (3) the climax, crisis, or turning point (4) the resolution, falling action, or consequence; and (5) the denouement, catastrophe, or conclusion. Let it not be thought for a moment that each of these stage is clearly differentiated. As a rule they pass insensibly into each other, as they do in life. Especially it is true in a play like *Much Ado About Nothing*, where the weaving of the plot is so close and compact."

Ridley says: "The Comedy of Errors was a skilful piece of clockwork that kept time and struck the quarters with unrelieved precision; 'The Taming of the Shrew' was, so far as its main plot was concerned, rather farce than true comedy; 'The Two Gentlemen of Verona' was something a preliminary sketch, though it showed clearly enough the sort of thing that was to come; 'Love Labours Lost' was largely a typical skit; 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' was what it advertised itself to be, fantasy rather than comedy; and 'The Merchant of Venice,' though it marked a considerable advance and was a brilliant success, was full of technical flaws. 'Much Ado About Nothing' signalizes the final conquest of the realm of comedy. Design will no longer outrun execution nor the mere pleasure of execution distort design. There are two other of the great comedies to come. Which of the three, any reader or play-goer prefers, depends on temperament, or even on transitory mood; but it can hardly be supposed that 'As You Like It' and 'Twelfth Night' show any advance in technique, whether

the designer's or the craftman's. Much Ado About Nothing' is the most closely-knit of the comedies, and by far the most sparking".

1. The Exposition (Introduction)

Act I. Scene i. The opening scene performs the two fold function of explaining the stitution and starting the action. The more important personages of the play are introduced and their relation to one another indicated. The audience are prepared for the main plot and the underplot, the Hero-Claudio story and the Beatrice-Benedick story respectively. We have a sort of prologue, though not in the conventional manner, up to the entrance of Don Pedro and the lords, from where there begins a brisk and sparking dialogue in prose in which the true relation of Beatrice and Benedick and their interest in each other are made visible even though the mask of their wit combat. Claudio's love for Hero is communicated to Benedick and Don Pedro, the latter of whom plans to disguise himself as Claudio to win Hero for him.

11. The Complication

Act. I. Scene ii. "A short bustling scene like this is one of Shakespeare's favourite devices. The complication information about which he has obtained from servant. The servant's mistake has the potentialities of future humorous complications.

Act I. Scene iii. The character of Don John, a typical Shakespearean villain, is laid bare in all its inward wickedness. A bastard by birth, he has a general grievance against society as a whole and a particular one against Claudio who, he thinks, he is successful rival. When the banquet is in progress, he is nursing his imaginary grievance apart with one of his creatures. Borachio's story of Cloudio's contemplated marraige and of Don Pedro's active co-operation in the matter presents to him an opportunity for revenge, and he proceeds to carry it out that very evening. The tragic complications begin.

Act II. Scene i. The main plot makes a distinct advance in this brilliant scene. In spite of Don John's attempt at mischief making. Hero and Claudio are betrothed. But Claudio's readiness to beiieve Don John's insinuations against his friend Don Pedro throws light on Claudio's character and prepares the audience for his monstrous behaviour towards Hero. The duel of wit between Beatrice and Benedick assumes ominous proportions and develops open hostilities by their being made to hear what they think of each other. The scene concludes with a declaration by Don Pedro that he will contrive such a plot as will make the two sworn enemies, Beatrice and Benedick, fall desperately in love with each other.

Act II Scene ii. While Don Pedro and his friend are engaged in maturing their comic plot, Don John and his creatures are concocting their villainous plot to frustrate the marriage. Margaret, Hero's 'waiting gentlewoman,' personating Hero, will make love to Borachio on the night before the wedding, the whole scene being watched by Don Pedro and Claudio and accepted by them as the final proof of Hero's disloyalty.

Act II Scene iii. The comic sub-plot advances in this scene, at least as far as Benedick is concerned. The plot against Benedick's single blessedness is now carried out. He is made to overhear a conversation between Don Pedro and his friends in which is discussed how desperately Beatrice loves him. A pause is made in the action by Balthasar's song, 'Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more' which is sarcastic commentary on the theme of the play. Benedick surrenders completely into the hands of the conspirators.

Act III Scene i. The plot against Beatrice is now carried out, this scene resembling the preceding one in general outline. Beatrice is made to overhear a conversation between Hero and Ursula which is discussed how desperately Benedick loves her. She too, like Benedick, surrenders completely into the hands of the plotters.

Act III Scene ii. The comic sub-plot and the serious main plot are closely interwoven in this scene. While the comic plotters are making fun at the expense of Benedick's love-lorn state. Don John enters and openly accuses Hero of disloyality to Claudio.

Act III Scene iii. Dogberry and Verges, the eternal type of the stupid, blundering constable, are introduced while giving the charge to the stupid watch. By sheer chance they overheard the drunken Borachio tell Conrade of his villainous doings against Hero and they arrest him. Thus the plot is frustrated before it reaches it climax in the indictment of Hero in the church scene—a master touch of comic irony by which the spectators are happily made aware of a situation the true meaning of which is unknown to the actors.

Act III Scene iv. This short scene in Hero's apartment does not advance the plot. Only it gives us an idea of the eager preparation for marriage that are going on. Its dramatic value lies in focussing interest on the two heroines, Hero full of a vague presentment and Beatrice pining with love. Only Margaret, unconscious of the mischief she has done, is full of exuberant spirits.

Act III Scene v. This little scene is full of dramatic irony. The stupid, blundering Dogberry and Verges call on Leonato, the governor, to report their discovery of the plot against Hero; but partly through their own tedious sense of self-importance and partly through the fussy haste of Leonato the matter remains unreported thus the action is delayed. Here the comic sub-plot is closely interwoven with the main plot and is on the point of solving the complication of the main plot.

III. The Climax And Crisis

Act IV Scene i. The repudiation of Hero by Claudio in what is known as the church scene forms the climax of the main plot. All the different strands of the plot are tied into a knot as it were. In the mind of the audience the passion aroused is almost tragic and the comedy is perliously near being a tragedy.

IV. The Resolution

Act IV Scene i. **In this part of the scene begins the untying of the knot. The Friar who came to perform the nuptial**

rites and who stood by in silence during the accusation, now comes forward with his suggestion after the accusers are gone. He reads in Hero's face the marks of maidenly innocence and advises them to give out that Hero is dead till Claudio is moved to remorse.

Act IV. Scene i. The comic sub-plot is introduced here in this scene. Two friends are faithful to Hero in her hour of need, Beatrice and Benedick are called forth into active play. The plot against Hero brings them together and they pledge themselves to work together to establish her innocence. Thus the solution of the comic plot is brought into very close relation with the climax of the main plot.

Act IV Scene ii. The trial of Borachio and Conrade is yet another distinct step in advance towards the solution of the main plot. It is a happy stroke of dramatie contruction by which the innocence of Hero is established elsewhere almost while Hero is accused in the church. This scene is comic in the extreme. The main plot is closely interwoven with the second sub-plot.

Act V. Scene i. Antonio and Leonato challenge Claudio and Don Pedro with their senile bombast to a duel by way of revenge which comes to nothing: Benedick according to the pledge he has given to Beatrice, challenges Claudio who accepts it; when Claudio learns from Borachio of the plot against Hero, he offers to make amends, so far as it lies within human power under the circumstances, by hanging penitential verse on Hero's tomb and expresses his readiness to marry Leonato's niece who is according to Leonato, an exact copy of the dead Hero. This is a beautiful scene of reconciliation, restoring friendly relations, temporarily disturbed among the principal characters.

Act V. Scene ii. This scene is very happily conceived, though it does not advance the action. Beatrice and Benedick are shown in the charming role of lovers. It fills up the interval between scenes I and III with a sort of interlude.

Act V. Scene iii. As a handsome act of penance, Claudio hangs his verse-epitaph on the tomb of Hero with appropriate ceremony. The atmosphere of the scene is one of dignity and solemnity.

V. Conclusion

Act V. Scene iv. As is the case with Shakespeare's comedies, the denouement is skilfully but lightly sketched. Don John is fled but is later arrested and brought back to Messina, and Claudio has done penance. When Claudio comes to marry Leonato's niece a very agreeable surprise awaits him in the form of his dead bride risen from the grave. Delightful touches of humour are lent to the scene by Beatrice's flouting of Benedick and his stopping her mouth with a kiss. The play concludes with a dance.

12. Discrepancies and Improbabilities of the Plot

In the very stage-directions of the opening scene, as also in Act II. ii, occurs a glaring inconsistency in the inclusion among the *dramatic personae* of Innogen, wife of Leonato and mother of Hero, to whom no part is given in the action. "At the very

opening of the play, we find a perplexing inconsistency—Beatrice and Benedick already intimate, Claudio a stranger, and then Claudio not a stranger. We feel that something here is left untold. When Leonato is first spoken of by the messenger, he is a perfect stranger of whom Beatrice and Leonato have never heard. When he first appears not a sign of recognition passes between the two parties. Claudio, after he has fallen in love with Hero, enquires of Don Pedro if Leoanto has a son. Then we are suddenly informed that Claudio already knew Hero and was in love with her even before the war.

The *proxy wooing story* is a outcome of absurdities. The plot of the play does not demand it nor does it in any way advance the plot. Leonato is informed by his brother that "a good sharp fellow" has told him that he overheard Don Pedro confessing to Claudio that he loved Hero and would propose to her that night at the masked ball. Nobody knows who the good sharp fellow is; no importance is attached to the matter in the play. Borachio comes to inform his master, Don John, that Don Pedro proposes to woo Hero for himself and then hand her over to Claudio. But afterwards, at the masked ball, Don John forgets it and says that Don Pedro is enamoured of Hero and has retired to a corner to tell Leonato about it. It is difficult to understand how he recognised his brother under his disguise. Claudio, though he knows the whole secret of the proxy wooing, yet believes Don John's allegations against his friend, Don Pedro. This is absurd.

It is highly improbable that Borachio who is follower of Don John and who has been intimate with Margaret for a year should pass unrecognised as such in Leonato's house and should be set to fumigate a room. Where could he possibly overhear the conversation between Don Pedro and Claudio about the proxy wooing? His version of the wooing materially differs from the truth and from Antonio's version.

The unchastity plot, especially the Borachio-Margaret story is full of weaknesses. The beginning of the unchastity story is too abrupt and sudden, making it look like the part of an independent play. It is, from beginning to end, utterly unconvincing. The proxy wooing story and the unchastity story, though they form parts of the same play, have nothing to do with each other; so they have made some people think that *Much Ado is a compound of two other plays.*

Claudio has already been deceived by the villains in the matter of the proxy wooing; he is so absolutely gullible that he lends a credulous ear to their allegations against Hero a second time in the unchastity plot without a moment's doubt. The Margaret-Borachio story does not bear a moment's examination. It may be pertinently asked how Margaret could have been persuaded to personate Hero, to dress like Hero and to be called by her name and still have no inkling of any intended evil against her mistress to whom she is supposed to be very faithful. It passes our comprehension how she could associate with such a base character as Borachio and why she maintained absolute silence at the church or later, when a word would have explained everything and saved her mistress from disgrace.

13. Tragic Elements in Much Ado About Nothing

Tragedy and comedy are the twin sisters of the same mother ....life. Life is neither tear, nor smile; it is a farrago of pleasure and sorrow. Nature is the pole-star of the art of Shakespeare. His plays make "flagrant violation" of demarcation line between tragedy and comedy. His tragedies are replete with humorous passages and witty touches; similarly, his comedies have ragic streaks.

Though "Much Ado About Nothing" is a comedy where everything comes to a happy ending, it has a serious tragic element also which is more prominent than in any other comedy of Shakespeare. Chambers has observed in his book, 'Shakespeare: A Survey': "What must, I suppose, be regarded as the central motive of 'Much Ado About Nothing' falls within the conception of tragic-comedy in that exaggerated form of which the degenerate modern examples have earned the depreciatory name of melodrama. A gallant and noble youth, Count Claudio, is betrothed to a beautiful and irreproachable lady, Hero. The course of true love is forbidden to run smooth by the machinations of Don John, a thorough-paced villain of the deliberate Machlavellian type dear to the Elizabethan imagination. Don John is a dark and sinister figure, one , ...

Whose spirits toll in frame of villainies, and whom at any moment you expect to say, like Barabbas in "The Jew of Malta". . . . .

'I must dissemble'. Don John's plotting throws a cloud of suspicion on the fair name of Hero. Claudio rejects her at the steps of the altar. She is believed to be dead of grief and shame. Then, through mean instruments, the false hood is recovered, the lady's innocence is proclaimed, she is discovered to be living after all, and is restored to the arms of the lover with whom she is to live happy even after. The scheme is perhaps justified by the fine emotional handling of the scene in the church, and by the pathetic mourning song over the wronged Hero while she is still thought by Claudio to be dead. But it is obvious that it belongs throughout to the melodramatic plan; and if you marvel at the insufficient evidence on which a grave slander against a spotless woman is accepted, or express a doubt whether Claudio's conduct was really such as should have been compensated by the recovery of his bride, the only possible answer is that those things are integral parts of the melodramatic formula, and cannot be disturbed without risk of the whole ancient edifice tumbling to the ground. Any closer psychology would have inconsistant with the distance at which melodrama makes it very abstract rendering of life.

Roderich Benedix, a German critic, says : "Here is no stuff for comedy. A girl slandered and illtreated to an unutterable extent is not an object to awaken merriment. And it is degrading that she should finally, without hesitation, marry her slanderer. Again, Claudio is a vain coxcomb, with no will of his own. What can poor Hero expect from a marriage with such a wretch?"

"As regards the structure of the play, the combination of incidents does not lead to any fitting result. The principal event is,

if not tragic, at least grave and agitating. It should have a natural result. There should have been serious atonement for the malicious and wanton insult offered to Hero by Don Pedro and Claudio. But the play must be a comedy and consequently there is universal reconciliation in the twinkling of an eye. It is excusable that a deeplaid dramatic plot should come to nothing; that a dramatic cause should produce nothing."

But if the tale of Hero is structurally the backbone of 'Much Ado About Nothing', it is nonetheless clear that it is far from exhausting the dramatic interest of the play. Side by side with the tragi-comic theme, there is also a theme of pure comedy for our laughter in the paradox of the relations between Hero's cousin Beatrice and Claudio's friend Benedick. They are jesters at love, and their conduct infuses the spirit of mirth into the play.

14. Critical Appreciation of the Play

"Much Ado About Nothing" is the crowning achievement of Shakespeare. It presents a lively portrayal of life. Stopford Brooke has rightly remarked: "We are more than dramatically satisfied by the vivid presentation of human life in the play. There is such a pleasing variety of characters in the play, and those perfectly maintained as well as distinguished, that you lose the absurdities of the conduct in the excellence of the manner, sentiment, diction, and topics. They are thrilling with youth and gaiety, with the serious passions of love, wrath, envy, indignation, sorrow, patience, friendship, audacious hope, excelling joy. . . . even with the passion of death. Not even in the 'Twelfth Night' or in As You Like It is the livingness of life more living, not even in these is Shakespeare's power of creation greater. Beatrice and Benedick are the quintessence, the centre of his life. They receive it and reflects it brighter than they receive it."

Lady Martin considers "Much Ado About Nothing" as one of the best plays of Shakespeare, from the point of view of construction. She says : "The play is a master-piece of construction, developed with consummate skill, and held together by the unflagging interest which we feel in Beatrice and Benedick and in the progress of the amusing plot by which they arrive at a knowledge of their own hearts.

Shakepeare illustrates his view of life in the play. Man, in spite of all his boast of freedom and independence, is but the important creature of his temperament——this is the force that controls his personality, and its development. In accord with his view, while on one hand there must be no more talk of freedom of will and self-mastery, on the other, there needs only a certain temperament so force us to succumb to evil. As a matter of fact, Shakespeare has discovered the Achilles-heel of mankind. No human being he says, exists, who cannot be thrown off his balance if assailed through his temperament. Beatrice and Benedick make shipwreck upon this characteristic of human personality : it is the cornerstone of Don Pedros treacherous scheme which causes them to belie their former selves, a scheme devised with extreme subtlety

and knowledge of mankind. It is most intersting to note the lever which Don Pedro employs to put in motion this characteristic. We here meet with a profound psychological conception, one which can be traced in subtle windings throughout the play, making it a re-makable contrast to the 'Midsummer Night's Dream', in which Shakespeare influences his character through the eye; in "Much Ado About Nothing' the does it through the ear. When we speak of possessing a man's ear it is equivalent to saying that we have him, and modern psychology recognises the profound mental significance of the ear. It is this significance that Shakespeare illustrates in the play for the first time in Benedick and Beatrice.

Mark Van Doren says: "In his comic scene," said Dr. Johnson, 'he seems to produce without labour what no labour can improve. His tragedy seems to be skill, his comedy to be insti nct.' Whatever applicability this may have to the tragedies to Shakespeare's prime, and it appears to have none at all its, truth is perhaps self-evident with respect to the three comedies he wrote during the last year or so of the sixteenth century. And it is a convenient starting point for any discussion of "Much Ado About Nothing,' whose comedy of Benedick and Beatrice is so flexible, so instinc-tive, and whose tragedy of Claudio and Hero is so strangely stiff."

15. The Characters

Claudio.

In the conventional sense Claudio is the hero of the play, for he is the handsome young lover who leads the heroine to the altar. But Claudio is not the most interesting charater in the play. Some persons find him odious and describe him, in modern slang, as a 'cad.'

Kreyssing, a German critic, has observed: "The repulsive traits in Claudio's character have been frequently indicated. Arrogant, faint-hearted, liable to hasty change of mood, and in anger cap-able of heartless cruelty, he repeatedly brings into question his qualification to be the hero of the play. A silly farce enacted in the darkness of night by a low villain and waiting maid, is suffici-ent proof of the blinded eyes of his hot head to condemn the first lady in Messina, a model of propriety, and his own betrothed. What sort of a sense of honour is that which permits a man in the very height of his grief for the death of his falsely slandered bride, to declare himself ready for another marriage to be arranged by the outraged father? All these, to speak mildly, unattractive features are part of Claudio's character."

In the opening scene of the play we are informed of bravery, 'doing in the figure of a lamb the feats of a lion.' We are also informed that, for this, he was much in the favour of Don Pedro. In the third scene (Act I) Borachio refers to him as Don Pedro's 'right hand.' In the same scene, Don John complains, 'That young up-start hath all the glory of my overthrow.' Claudio was young, in the full sense of the term and he was also an 'upstart.' Perhaps his too rapid rise in the Prince's favour unstea-died him a bit. He was vain, immature, lacking in initiative, like all young men; and *he nursed and overweening self-esteem in*

his heart. The best and the worst in him come out when he declares to Benedick his love for Hero (Act I, Scene I). But Claudio *hardly conforms to our conception of a lover.* He is perhaps too vain to fall in love seriously-after-all, love means self-surrender, a complete self-forgetfulness—after all, love means self-surrender, a complete to Beatrice, is a more convincing lover. Claudio fails in the test of true love. The first time Don John—so well known for his malice—tries his art on Claudio is completely taken in, and, in his wounded vainty, he suspects Don Pedro and speaks in curt monosyllables to Benedick (Act II, Scene I). And so much unlike an ardent lover, he is ready to give way to has imagined rival! *So a breath of suspicion is enough to unsettle him!* Again his conduct of the love affair, he thanks Don Pedro for taking the initiative. Then, did he not follow up his profession of love for Hero by asking Don Pedro, "Hath Leonato any son, my lord?" (Act I, Scene I).

In this perhaps Claudio is not in any way worse than the average young wooer. He does not impress us as a true lover; there is no depth of understanding, no knowledge of human character in him as can help him out of a situation in which he finds himself a second time owing to Don John's machinations. The second trial of his love is severe, no doubt. But no man with a strong common sense would have behaved like him. His rash scheme of revenge for Hero's imputed sin is mean enough. His vanity is wonded, and he wants to hit back in a most malicious manner. When Leonato (Act V, Scene I) and Antonio rate him soundly, we all enjoy a vicarious satisfaction.

But once made aware of his error, Claudio repents sincerely. *The penitent Claudio is Claudio at his best.* Not that his penitence is compensation enough for the sufferinge of Hero, but it is redeeming feature of his character. His readiness to accept another bride, a sister of Hero without even seeing her, is quite commendable. But we cannot get over the feeling that *Hero was too noble a prize for this young soldier.* For, after his midnight vigil, is he not jaunty enough on his second wedding-day? A young man who walks with a swagger for snch a second wedding can hardly repudiate the charge of being somewhat heartless.

Hero

The predominating note of Hero's character is her modest silence. Her silence is thrown into relief by the gushing volubility of Beatrice. Hero is a modest young lady, 'a sweet and innocent lady' with a quiet charm of her own, she never comes forward in male company, but gladly gives the first place to her clever cousin. Herself so pure, she never imagines any impurity in others. Then *she is so much guided by the will of others;* She has very little of personal inclination; She is no Juliet with a passionate choice of her own. She accepts a husband because her father wills it. She is ready to accepts Don Pedro and when she is given to Claudio, she does not murmur. She has very little of individuality and suffers her life to be made to any pattern by her seniors. There is nothing in the play to show that she has any strong attachment

for Claudio. *Hero's is not the character out of which a romantic heroine is made.* But she is womanly enough with a keen sense of a personal honour. When at the church she is stricken down by the base tongue of slander, we should not suppose that her silence proceeds from any weakness of nature or want of spirit. Her agony is too intense and she faints. Because she does not protest, because she does not cry out with Beartice's tongue, "Kill Claudio," her suffering becomes all the more impressive.

But though not so brilliant as her cousin, she too can enter heartily into the make believer of Don Pedro's famous match-making project. Hero plays her part quite well and gets round Beatrice. Again, when towards the end of the play, Beatrice betrays her love for Benedick, she abstains from teasing her cousin with *a gracious forbearance.* So this little, silent woman. "Leonato's short daughter," has her portion of suffering and joy, tears and laughter; but she does not cry out in pain nor forget herself in happiness.

According to Hazlitt "Hero is the principal figure in the piece. and leaves an indelible impression on the mind by her beauty, her tenderness and the hard trial of her love. The story of Hero, however, does not seem to have been treated in Shakespeare's most characteristic manner. Hero is too passive, she is always acted upon and thought about: she never acts, she does not seem even to think. Extraordinarily tender and unsophisticated as she is, she cannot dominate the play as Rosalind or Portia might do. But she would have been more effective dramatically if we could had glimpses of the impulses and instincts, halfconscious but vital and forceful, which lie behind the quiescent surface of her character. It was the dramatist's duty and privilege to probe behind the mask of passivity into the sensitive soul and explore the contradictions, and compromises which make up human personality."

Beatrice

Beatrice is the wittiest character in the comedies of Shakespeare. Henry Giles who considers her as the embodiment of wit, has observed: "There is a character which we laugh with. To such order of character the wit belongs and Beatrice is a leader of the class. Others have wit. Beatrice is the wit. Visla has wit: but it is only the sparkling sword with which a maiden plays,. . . . . . a maiden who would faint at the sight of blood, and in whose hand it cannot wound. Rosalind has also wit, it dazzles in her words; but it is only the dew that bathes the flowers which it brightens. Beatrice is the wit in the completeness of character. She is resistless in the sphere of ridiculous; and there is nothing which she cannot place within that sphere. Once engaged in the play of her facuility, like every acknowledged wit, she gives it umbridled liberty."

Giving an estimate of Beatrice's character, Mrs. Jameson has observed: "In Beatrice, high intellect and high animal spirits meet, and excite each other like fire and air. In her wit, (which is brillint without being imaginative) there is a touch of insolance, not unfrequent in women when the wit predominates over reflection

and imagination. Her satirical humour plays with such an unrespective levity over all subjects alike, that it is required a profound knowledge of women to bring such a character within the pale of our sympathy. But Beatrice, though wilful, is not wayward; she is volatile, not unfeeling. She has not only an exuberance of wit and gaiety, but of heart, and soul, and energy of spirit."

Beatrice is no "Shrew" who is tamed by a boisterous husband; she is a woman won by love. For all her cleverness, for all her sharp tongue and professions of self-sufficiency, she is a woman at heart. She is passionately devoted to her cousin; she is more than a sister to her. After the terrible church scene, she wants so bitterly to be a man for the sake of her wronged cousin! She had flint and iron in her, she was not all wit and fun." "Kill Claudio!" she says with all the passionate hatred of a heroine. Her hatred for Claudio is more intense than her love for Benedick, and she would accept Benedick as her lover when he proves himself worthy of her by challenging Claudio. What a stern test for a lover! But Benedick, for all his friendship for Claudio, proves himself worthy of her. At a touch, the wit disappears and the warrior comes forth, the knight doing a valiant deed of arms for the sake of a wronged lady, for the sake of love.

Technically, the most remarkable achievement of Beatrice is that, with hardly anything at all to do in what is nominally the main plot, she nevertheless becomes the chief figure of the piece, and the primary instigator of the sentiment which leads to the happy solution of the story. She is a lively symbol of the new state of affairs in the domain of comedy.

Referring to the character of Beatrice, Ridley has remarked: "Beatrice stands alone among Shakespeare's heroines. To none other of his 'good' women has he given the same measure of rivid fire. She has the same sort of zest for life, the same kindling vitality, as Webster's Vittoria, though directing her to far different ends. And her wit is far more than more verbal ability; it is part of her the expression of her nature, one of the channels into which her vitality overflows; wit to her is as natural as breathing and indeed like her breathing she could not live without it."

Benedick

The Character of Benedick is in many way similar to Beatrice's, and the difference between them is the difference in their sex. Their numerous 'skirmishes of wit, keep things warm in the play. Both are witty, quick of eye and quicker of tongue; but the lady's tongue has undoubtedly the sharper edge. Then both are sworn enemies of the other sex.' Benedick would fain die a bachelor; he prefers the 'single blessedness' to the amenities of married life. Beatrice is equally self-sufficient and is upon her knees 'every morning and evening' for not having a husband. They are Cupid's foe ; and the mischievous blind god has a lot of fun out of them. For it should be noticed, that both have secret preference for each other. The fact that the lady is easily inclined to write sentimental letter and the gentleman shaves off his beard and fashions a 'halting sonnet' proves that they were at heart inclined towards each other.

Stopford Brooks says in his book 'On Ten More Plays of Shakespeare' : "There are in any society of the time, a host of men like Claudio, or Deonato, a multitude of women like Hero. But there are not half a dozen men like Benedick, or women like Beatrice. They own no master, no influence, save their own self-mastery, self-influence. There wit is of similar kind, and both of them rejoice in it, cherish it, are vain of it, and excite it to battle. When they have their passion run on similar lines. The type is the same, but the woman presents it one way, the man in another."

"Benedick and Beatrice are both endowed with more than ordinary powerful intellect of the sort that always strives to repress emotions. Benedick in trying to avoid Benedick, really flies from his own weakness and when Beatrice mocks at Benedick, she only tortures an emotion she is too proud to acknowledge even to herself. Emotions, however, have their origin in the innermost senses of the soul which are only imperfectly illuminated by reason. It is no wonder, therefore, that occasions arise when we are made aware of the deeper class of the Life Force which puts the meddling intellect to shame. The picture Shakespeare draws in Benedick and Beatrice of the interaction between the intellect and the inner soul is at once one of the most sparkling and one the most significant achievements in comedy."

Referring to the character of Benedick Ridley remarked: Benedick is considerably more of a man than most of Shakespeare's comedy heroes, and indeed he needs to be, or he will never stand up to Beatrice. Orlando is his position would be battered into bewildered insensibility, and Orsino would retire hurt in a fit or aristocratic sulks: and in either case the play would collapse." Benedick is cast in heroic mould. He is indeed worthly of Beatrice. Beatrice calls out "Kill Claudio !" Benedick gives a quick and befitting respose to the situation. "I will kiss your hand, and so leave you. By this hand, Claudio shall render me a dear account ; as you hear of me, so think of me (Act IV Scene I). No true knight could have uttered anything more convincing.

Dogberry

Dogberry along with Verges embodies the broad humour of Shakespeare in contrast with the sharp wit of Benedick and Beatrice. Referring to the importance of Dogberry in 'Much Ado About Nothing' Ulrici, a German critic, has remarked : "Most delightful is the contradiction between appearance and reality, between subjective conception and objective reality, as we have it exhibited in the clown of the piece, the dutiful constable Dogberry who considers his position so very important and maintains it so zealously, but who is always uttering contradictory maxims and precepts, who looks at things with so correct an eye and yet pronounces such foolish judgments. Dogberry plays essentially the same part as the fool in 'Twelfth Night', Touchstone in "As You Like It', Launce in 'The Two Gentlemen of Verona', and the majority of the clowns in Shakespeare's comedies."

From the purely artistic point of view. Shakespeare's most

original creation in this play in surely neither Benedick nor Beatrir, but Master Constable, Dogberry, Coleridge suggests that Dogberry and his comrades are indispensable to the plot and that 'any other less ingeniously absurd watchmen and night-constables would have answered the mere necessities of the action.' Miss Grace Trenery, joining issue with Coleridge, retorts that 'less ingeniously absurd watchmen' would not have possessed just that mixture of shrewdness and folly that at once to the prompt capture of delinquents and to the fatal delay in the exposure of conspiracy. Dogberry,' she writes, 'is not a complete fool ; but we must, apologetically, write him down as ass.'

The truth about Dogberry is that he lives in a fantastic world of his own with its peculiar notions about man's character and his duties in relation to society. It is because his values are of his own making that he can afford to be so notably absurd, saying and doing things that make us wonder, for words and deeds have not the same meaning in his world as they have in ours.

In all his best comedies, Shakespeare is a past-master in contrasting different types of comic, and in 'Much Ado About Nothing' our pleasure is not caused just by Dogberry and Verges being funny, but their being funny in a particular way. The encounters of Beatrice and Benedick are brilliant and scintillating, but there is often a kind of hardness about the brilliance, and our eyes become tired of following the glint of the rapiers ; also these duels, like Meredith's conversations, are a trifle damping to ourself esteem, we are sadly aware that in our wildest dreams we could never scale those heights of wit. And then comes in the delicious and lovable old stupid, whose humour we can appreciate at leisure.

Don Pedro.

Don Pedro is fond of gaiety and frivolity and he loves the company of light-hearted young men. *He is a prince on whom his royalty sits very lightly*. He is courteous, gentlemanly and good-natured. He is always ready to come to the help of his *proteges*. He woos Hero for Claudio. He has intiative and he can very well devise a scheme. He is also fond of match making. He promises Beatrice a husband and hits upon the clever plan of weding Benedick and Beatrice. But Don Pedro, though good-natured and gay, is not wise. *He is helpful friend but a bad counsellor*. He is completely taken in by the clumsy devices of Don John, and he proves a very bad adviser for Claudio. He has, like Claudio, very little knowledge of human nature. Not only so, he supports Claudio in his station, a gentleman, should not have done. Of course he repents sincerely when he comes to know his error, but he does incalculable harm by his credulity.

Don John.

Don Jon is Don Devil, all malice and spleen. He is a bastard, Fortune is not kind to him. He talks little, by nature he is melancholy and sour. Beatrice, so full of sunshine, does not naturally like Don John. "How tartly that gentleman looks ! I never see

him but my heart-burned an hour after. He is also surrounded by servants of like temper. And he is extremely jealous of Claudio, 'the young upstart.' This is the reason for his hateful plottings against Hero and Claudio. *He is pure evil, and he does not care much for 'reason' or 'motive.'* As soon as he comes to learn of 'an intended marriage' from Borachio' he asks,—"Will it serve for any model to build mischief on ?" This shows what sort of a man he is. He wants to evil, to 'build some mischief,' no matter whatever the occasion is, Again, *he is a synic.* Of marrage he has a low opinion : "Who is he for a fool that betroths himself to unquietness?" he asks. He calls Hero "a very forward March chick" *He has a foul mouth and a foul mind.* He does not 'mischief' enough but he leaves his associates in the lurch and tries to save his skin by making himself scarce. We leave him with the impression that no punishment would be too severe for a villain of his type.

Leonato.

Leonato, the Governor of Messina, appears in the first scene of the play as a courteous, affable, hospitable nobleman. He talks politely of the Prince, Claudio and Benedick, and welcomes them all. *Though old, there is very little of austerity about him.* He talks free with all and enjoys a joke as much as Don Pedro or Benedick. *It does his old heart good to see gay, young faces.* He never cuts shorts his niece, Beatrice for all her freedom of speech. His good humour is simply infectious. *His love for his daughter is profound, but equally profound is his sense of honour* and regard for the name of the family. When he hears the charges of Claudio (supported by Don Pedro) against Hero, he wishes his daughter to die rather than taint the name of the family. For the time being however, he display a lack of faith in his daughter which cannot be fully justified. His grief for her sufferings is immense, once he comes to know how pure she is. Though enfeebled by age, he does not hesitate to challenge Claudio to a duel (Act V Scene I). He is a courageous old man who would fain die fighting the slanderers of his daughter.

Antonio.

Antonio, the borther of Leonato, is known by "the waggling" of his head and his "dry hands" (Act II. Scene I). He is not an important figure, he fills up this position, that is all. Old as he is he too likes fun and jollity, he too wants to bask in the sunshine of youth. He loves his niece ardently. We get a fine glimpse into the character of the man when he suddenly joins his brother in challenging Don Pedro and Claudio (Act V, Scene I) forgetting his role as a comforter.

Borachio and Conrade.

Borachio is a good servant for his master. He is mostly responsible for the villoinous plot of slandering Hero. It is he who brings information about the marriage to Don John, he also suggests the plot and carries it out with the help of the unsuspecting Margaret. Again, he is a coward at heart. When his villainy is discovered, he makes a full confession.

Conrade is a rather colourless villain. He plays no important

roll in play. He tries to give comfort to his melancholy master (Act I. Scene III), and he is ready to assist his master in his nefarious plot "to the death." Borachio makes the all-important confession in his ears (Act III, Scene III).

Margaret and Ursula.

Margaret and Ursula are the two "waiting gentlewomen" to Hero. From their free and easy manner it is evident that they are not regarded mere servants. Margaret treats Beatrice and Hero as her equal. Hero does not take any offence at her vulgar jokes, nor does Beatrice give any retort for it (Act III. Scene IV). Margaret is a bit too free in her speech, *she does not stop short of showing indecent talk. There is indeed a vulgar strain in her,* a gentlewoman as she is. So also in her choice of a lover she does not exhibit much good taste. Borachio is the last person whom a lady of good taste can select as a lover. Then her ready consent to imitate Hero at that "Unseasonable instant of the night" does not do her any credit. *The most puzzling feature in her character is her silence after the church scene.* There is nothing in the play to show that she is in the least repentent for what she has done at the instance of Borachio. We know that Margaret is more or less innocent of any idea of injuring her mistress, but she has wit enough to understand the consequences what she has done. Dr. Turner tries to justify her conduct in this way, "For all we know she may none too good to enter full into the plot, and as for her silence when a word would have saved her mistress, we must realize that the word would carry with it the ruin of her lover; at this alternative she might well have paused, and during that pause the opportune minute passed and the chance was gone." We cannot however get over the idea that perhaps Shakespeare has been somewhat careless in the construction of the play, otherwise it is very hard to explain the conduct of Margaret.

Ursula.

Ursula is not prominent in the play as the voluble Margaret. *She is witty, and her wit is of a purer and more intellectual cast.* In the mask scene, Ursula proves herself more than a match for the old Antonio: "Come, come, do you think I do not know by your excellent wit ? Can virtue hide itself? Go to, mum, you are he : graces will appear, and there's an end." It also appears that, though Margaret' enjoys greater freedom of speech, Ursula is more in the confidence of Hero.

The Friar

Friar Francis a wise man who understands human character quite well. Even Leonato distrusts his daughter, but the Friar divines her innocence and purity. Being a prudent man, he at once devises a scheme by which the lovers might be re-united (Act IV, Scene I). Leonato and his brother towards Claudio, it might have proved successful, and Claudio might have repented of his rash accusation. We remember the Friar as a kindly, gentle, wise old man who has seen life steadily and seen it completely.

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Ursula.

Ursula is not so prominent in the play as the voluble Margaret. She is witty and her wit is of a more sober and more intellectual type. In the mask scene, Ursula proves herself more than a match for the old Antonio: "Come, come, do you think I do not know by your excellent wit? Can virtue hide itself? Go to, mum, you are he: graces will appear, and there's an end." It also appears that, though Margaret enjoys greater freedom of speech, Ursula is more in the confidence of Hero.

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MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

With Complete Paraphrase and Side Notes :

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Don Pedro, prince of Arragon.

Don John, his bastard brother.

Claudio, a young lord of Florence.

Benedick, a young lord of Padua.

Leonato, governor of Messina.

Antonio, his brother.

Balthasar, attendant on Don Pedro.

Conrade,
Borachio, } followers of Don John.

Friar Francis. Priest.

Dogberry, a constable.

Verges, a headborough.

A Sexton.

A Boy.

Hero, daughter to Leonato.

Beatrice, niece to Leonato.

Margaret,
Ursula, } gentlewomen attending on Hero.

Messengers, Watch, Attendants &c.

Scene : *Messina.*

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

ACT 1.

Scene 1. *Before* **Leonato's** *house.*

Enter **Leonato, Hero,** *and* **Beatrice,**
with a Messenger.

Leon. I learn in this letter the Pedro of Arragon comes this night to Messina.

Mess. He is very near *by this*[1]: he was not *three leagues off*[2] when I left him.

Leon. How many *gentlemen*[3] have you lost in this action ?

Mess. But few of any *sort,*[4] and none of *name*[5].

Leon. A victory is twice itself when the *achiever*[6] brings home full numbers. I find here that Don Pedro hath bestowed much honour on a young Florentine called Claudio.

Mess. Much deserved on his part, and equally remembered by Don Pedro : he hath borne himself beyond the promise of his age, doing, in the figure of a lamb, the feats of a lion ; he hath indeed *better bettered*[7] expectation than you must expect of me to tell you how.

Leon. He hath an uncle here in Messina will be very much glad of it.

Mess. I have already delivered him letters, and there appears much joy in him ; even so much, that joy could not show itself modest enough without a *badge*[8] of bitterness.

Leon. Did he break out into tears ?

Mess. In great measure.

Leon. A *kind overflow of kindness*[9] : there are no faces truer than those that are so washed. How much better is it to weep at joy than to joy at weeping !

Beat. I pray you, is Signior Montanto returned from the wars or no ?

Mess. I know none of that name, lady ; there was none such in the army of any sort.

Leon. What is he that you ask for, niece ?

Hero. My cousin means Signior Benedick of Padua.

Mess. O, he's returned; and as *pleasant*[10] as ever was.

1. By this time, now.
2. Approximately nine miles.
3. (1) men or (1) men of noble birth.
4. (1) Rank, distinction (2) kind
5. Title high rank.
6. Victor, conqueror.
7. Gone much further beyond, surpassed.
8. Sign, mark.
9. An instinctive or natural overflow of tenderness.
10. Witty, full of fun.

ACT I

Scene I. *Before* Leonato's *house*.

Enter Leonato, Hero, *and* Beatrice, *with a* Messenger.

Leon. The letter you have brought tells me that Don Pedro of Arragon will be in Messina to-night.

Mess. He must be almost here by any time : he was less than nine miles from Messina when I departed from him.

Leon. How many men of noble birth on your side were killed in this battle ?

Mess. There were but few killed of lower-rank, and none of high rank.

Leon. A victory is doubly creditable when there is little or no loss of life, and the victorious general is able to return home with all his soldiers. The letter also informs me that Prince Don Pedro has conferred great honour on a young gentleman of Florence, named Claudio.

Mess. His merits fully deserve the honour, and the honour bestowed upon him by Don Pedro equals his merits ; he has displayed more couarge and valour than could be expected from a man so young as he : though gentle as a lamb, yet he has played the very lion in bravery in the battlefield, performing the courageous and heroic feats of a veteran warrior ; indeed you must not expect me to tell you (it is beyond my powers to describe to you) how far his deeds have surpassed all our expectations about so young a person.

Leon. There is his uncle living in this town of Messina who will be exceedingly glad to hear of it.

Mess. I have already given him his letters, and he seemed overjoyed ; indeed his joy was so overpowering that at last it assumed the distinctive mark or badge of grief, namely, silent tears, in order to keep itself within the bounds of modesty as it were.

Leon. Did he really shed tears of joy ?

Mess. Yes, abundantly.

Leon. It was a natural outpouring of tenderness ; there is none more true-hearted than he whose face is thus washed with tears. It is infinitely better to shed tears of joy than to feel joy at the sight of tears !

Beat. Please tell me whether Sir Montanto is returned from the compaign or not.

Mess. I don't know any person of that name, lady ; there was certainly no one so called in the army.

Leon. Who is he, niece, that you are making enquiries about ?

Hero. Cousin Beatrice is speaking of Sir Benedick, a gentlman of Padua.

Mess. Oh ! yes, he has come back, and he is as full of wit and mirth as ever.

Beat. He *set up his bills*[1] here in Messina and challenged Cupid at the *flight* ;[2] and my uncle's fool, reading the challenge, *subscribed*[3] for Cupid, and challenged him at the birdbolt. I pray you how many hath he killed and eaten in these wars ? But how many hath he killed ? for indeen I promised to eat all of his killing.

Leon. Faith, niece, you *tax*[4] Signior Benedick too much ; but he'll be *meet*[5] with you, I doubt it not.

Mess. He hath done good service, lady, in these wars.

Beat. You had musty victual, and he hath holp to eat it ; he is a very *valiant trencherman*[6]: he hath an excellent stomach.

Mess. And a good soldier too, lady.

Beat. And a good soldier to a lady : but what is he to a lord ?

Mess. A lord to a lord, a man to a man ; *stuffed*[7] with all honourable virtues.

Beat. It is so, indeed ; he is no less than a *stuffed-man*[8]; but for the stuffing,—well, we are all mortal.

Leon. You must not, Sir, mistake my niece. There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her : they never meet but there's a *skirmish of wit*[9] between them.

Beat. Alas ! he gets nothing by that. In our last conflict four of his *five wits*[10] went *halting off*[11] and now is the whole man governed with one : so that if he have wit enough to keep himself warm, let him bear it for a difference between himself rnd his horse ; for it is all the wealth that he hath left, to be known a reasonable creature. Who is his companion now ? He hath every month a new *sworn brother*.[12]

Mess. Is't possible ?

Beat. Very easily possible ; he wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat ; it ever changes with the *next block*.[13]

Mess. I see, lady, the gentleman is not in your *books*.[14]

Beat. No ; an he were, I would burn my *study*.[15] But, I pray you, who is his companion ? Is there no young *squarer*[16] now that will make a voyage with him to the devil ?

Mess. He is most in the company of the right noble Claudio.

Beat. O Lord, he will hang upon him like a disease : he is sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs

1. Posted up placards.
2. A light arrow for long distance shooting.
3. Took up the challenge.
4. Censure, jeer at.
5. Quits, even.
6. Brave or great eater.
7. Filled, crammed.
8. Padded ; not a real man.
9. Witcombat, wordy warfare.
10. Intellectual faculties.
11. Limping, walking off lamely.
12. Bosom-friend.
13. The next fashion, the newest style
14. Favour
15. Library.
16. Quarreler, quarelsome fellow

Beat. When he was here last time, he, like the public challengers, posted placards, challenging Cupid, the god of love, to compete with him shooting at the hearts of women at long distance with long, lightfeathered shafts (out of a colossal vanity of his power over women) ; my uncle's jester, to ridicule this gentleman's vanity, accepted the challenge on behalf of the little love-god and invited him to shoot at birds with birdbolts-short, thick arrows without a point. Please tell me how many he has slain and eaten in these battles. I am dying to learn how many he has slain, for I vowed I would eat every one he slew.

Leon. In truth, my dear niece, you make fun of him too freely; but I am sure he will be even with you, he is quite a match for you.

Mess. He has proved very useful in this campaign, lady.

Beat. I have no doubt that he has been of great assistance in consuming your stale provisions ; he is a great eater ; he has an excellent appetite.

Mess. He is a brave soldier too, lady.

Beat. Yes, he is a brave soldier to a lady ; but what is he when it is a question of meeting a lord ?

Mess. He is a lord's equal and the equal of any man (the equal of everybody, lord or man) ; he is full of noble qualities.

Beat. That is exactly so ; he is a man made up of padding of stuffing like a doll, not a real man ; but as for the quality of the padding—why, I need not say anything ; we are all poor human creatures.

Leon. You must not misunderstand my niece, Sir. There is always a playful strife between Sir Benedick and my niece. Every time they meet, there is a wit-combat between the two.

Beat. Unfortunately, he is always the loser. In our last contest of wit four of his five wits (common wit, imagination, fancy, estimation, memory corresponding to the five senses) were badly lamed (so as to be altogether useless) with the result that he has now only one left to guide him; if he has still commonsense enough to protect himself from cold, let him regard it as the only point of difference between himslf and his horse; for all the wealth that is left him to prove that he is a rational being (and not a beast) is a little amount of commonsense. Who is his intimate friend now ? He has every month a new friend to whom he swears eternal fidelity.

Mess. Could it be true?

Beat. Oh ! yes without the least difficulty; he changes his faith as quickly as the style of his hat; when a new style comes into fashion, away goes the old.

Mess. Signior Benedick is obviously not on the list of your friends.

Beat. That he is not. If he were, I would burn the list. But do please tell me who is his friend just now. Is there no roystering youth who will keep him company in his wicked life.

Mess. He is mostly to be found with the wortly Claudio.

Beat. My God ! he is as difficult to get rid of as a sickness.

presently[1] mad. God help the noble Claudio ! if he have caught the Benedick, it will cost him a thousand pound ere a' be cured.

Mess. I will *hold*[2] friends with you, lady.

Beat. Do, good friend.

Leon. You will never run mad, niece.

Beat. No, not till a hot January.

Mess. Don Pedro is approached.

Enter **Don Pedro, Don John, Claudio,**

Benedick, *and* **Balthasar.**

D. Pedro Good Signior Leonato, you are come to meet your trouble : the fashion of the world is to avoid cost, and you *encounter*[3] it.

Leon. Never came trouble to my house in the likeness of your grace : for trouble being gone, comfort should remain ; but when you depart from me, sorrow abides and happiness takes his leave.

D. Pedro. You embrace your *charge*[4] too willingly. I think this is your daughter.

Leon. Her mother hath many times told me so.

Bene. Were you in doubt, Sir that you asked her ?

Leon. Signior Benedick, no ; for then were you a child.

D. Pedro You *have it full*,[5] Benedick : we may guess by this what you are, being a man. Truly, the lady *fathers herelf*[6]. Be happy, lady ; for you are like an honourable father.

Bene. If Signior Leonato be her father, she would not have his head on her shoulders for all Messina, as like him as she is.

Beat. I wonder that you will *still*[7] be talking. Signior Benedick : nobody *marks*[8] you.

Bene, What, my dear Lady Disdain ! are you yet living ?

Beat. Is it Possible disdain should die while she hath such *meet*[9] food to feed it as Signior Benedick? Courtesy itself must convert to disdain, if you come in her presence.

Bene. Then is courtesy a turncoat. But it is certain I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted : and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart ; for truly, I love none.

Beat. A *dear happiness*[10] to women : they would else have been troubled with a *pernicious*[11] suitor. I thank God and my cold *blood*,[12] I am of your *humour*[3] for that: I had

1. Immediately, at once.
2. Keep.
3. Meet.
4. Burden imposed upon you.
5. Full in the face, the worst of the wordy battle
6. Shows who her father is.
7. Always.
8. Notices.
9. Suitable.
10. A precious piece of good fortune.
11. Malignant.
12. Temperament.
13. Way of thinking, opinion.

He is more contagious than the plague, and whoever catches this disease at once loses his senses. May God help the good Claudio! If he is infected with this plague (Benedick), it will cost him a tremendous lot of money to get cured.

Mess. I should like to be the friend rather than the foe of a lady with such a gift of repartee as yourself; therefore I shall say no more on the subject, lady.

Beat. Let it be so, my friend.

Leon. You will never lose your senses, niece, for you will never catch the Benedick plague!

Beat. No, never, until such an impossibility as a hot winter occurs.

Mess. Don Pedro has arrived.

Enter **Don Pedro, Don John, Claudio, Benedick** *and* **Balthasar**

D. Pedro. Noble Signior Leonato, in welcoming me you welcome that which will be a source of trouble to you; the way of men is to avoid everything that costs them any trouble but you come to meet it.

Leon. You, my lord, have never been an object of trouble to my house. When trouble has gone, one is expected to be consoled; but when you have gone, joy bids me forewell and sadness remains.

D. Pedro. You accept this burden laid upon you too readily. This is your daughter, I believe.

Leon. I have been repeatedly told so by her mother.

Bene. Did you, Sir, ask her about this because you had some doubts?

Leon. No, Sir; for you were too young for it then.

D. Pedro. You have been delivered a good hit full in the face, Benedick; we can form our opinion about you from this remark, now that you are grown up to manhood. The lady's features plainly show who her father is. You may be glad of your likeness, lady, to a worthy father.

Bene. Although Signior Leonato is her father and she resembles him so closely, yet she would not care to exchange her fresh, young face for his old bearded one for all the wealth of Messina.

Beat. I am surprised, Signior Benedick, that you keep continuously chattering even though no one pays the slightest attention to you.

Bene. Oh, are you still alive, my Lady Disdain (Lady Scornful)?

Beat. Can Scorn ever die when there is such excellent material for its exercise as Signior Benedick? You are enough to turn politeness into scorn if you show yourself.

Bene. Then Politeness is a very fickle person. But it is a fact that I am loved by all ladies excepting yourself, and I greatly wish I were not so hard of heart; but I find I have no love for any one of them.

Beat. This is an extraordinary piece of good luck for the ladies, otherwise they would be tormented by a very malicious lover. Thanks

rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.

Bene. God keep your ladyship still in that mind! so some gentleman or other shall 'scape *predestinate scratched face*.[1]

Beat. Scratching could not make it worse, an 'twere such a face as yours were.

Bene. Well, you are a rare *parrot-teacher*[2].

Beat. A bird of my tongue is better than a beast of yours.

Bene. I would my horse had the speed of your tongue, and so good a continuer. But *keep your way*[3], i' God's name; I have done.

Beat, You always end with a *jade's trick*;[4] I know you of old.

D. Pedro. That is the sum of all. Leonato, Signior Claudio and Signior Benedick, my dear friend Leonato hath invited you all. I tell him we shall stay here at the least a month; and he heartily prays some occasion may detain us longer. I dare swear he is no hypocrite, but prays from his heart.

Leon. If you swear, my lord, you shall not be forsworn. (*To Don John*) Let me bid you welcome, my lord: being reconciled to the prince your brother, I owe you all duty.

D. John. I thank you : I am not of many words, but I thank you.

Leon. Please it your Grace lead on ?

D. Pedro. your hand, Leonato: we will go together.

[*Exeunt all except Benedick and Claudio.*]

Claud. Benedick, didst thou note the daughter of Signior Leonato ?

Bene. I noted her not; but I looked on her.

Claud. Is she not a modest young lady ?

Bene. Do you question me, as an honest man should do, for my *simple*[5] true judgment; or would you have me speak after my custom, as being a *professed*[6] tyrant to their sex.

Claud. No; I pray thee speak in sober judgment.

Bene. Why, i' faith, methinks she is too low for a high praise, too brown for a fair praise, and too little for a great praise: only this commendation I can afford her, that were she other than she is, she were unhandsome; and being no other but as she is, I do not like her.

Claud. Thou thinkest I am in sport: I pray thee tell me truly how thou likest her.

1. A scratched face which is his destiny.

2. Given to repeating old sayings and maxims.

3. Remains as you are.

4 A kick worthy of a vicious horse.

5. Frank and sincere.

6. Avowed, declared.

to God and to my cold temperament, I am of the same disposition as yourself in the matter of want of affection. I would everytime prefer hearing my dog bark at the birds to hearing a man swear that he loves me.

Bene. May you be always of that way of thinking, for in that case some poor man who might otherwise have married you will escape a scratched face which is the destiny of your husband.

Beat. If his face were like yours, no amount of scratching could make it uglier.

Beno. Upon my word, you have a good stock of set phrases which you might teach parrots to repeat.

Beat. My parrot-like phrases are better than you beastly phrases.

Bene. I wish my horse could gallop as swiftly as your tongue, and like it, could keep up the pace as long. Anyway, continue as you are, in God's name; I have nothing more to say !

Beat. You always in the end behave like a jaded or tired horse, refusing to go on when cornered; I have known you for a long time.

D. Pedro. That is all, Sir: gentlemen, my dear friend Leonato begs us all to stop with him while here; in spite of my telling him that we shall remain in Messina at least for a month he says that he hopes that some circumstances may luckily arise which will prolong our stay here. I am prepared to swear that he is quite sincere in the matter of this invitation.

Leon. You shall not be perjured, Prince. (To Don John) I welcome you too, my lord; now that you are restored to the good graces of your brother, I am bound to pay you also my allegiance.

D.John. Thanks very much for it; I am a man of few words, but my thanks are nonetheless sincere for that.

Leon. Will your Grace be good enough to lead the way ?

D. Pedro. Give me your hand, good friend, and let us go together.

[Exeunt all except Benedick and Claudio]

Claud. Benedick, did you observer Signior Leonato' daughter well?

Bene. I saw her, but I did not notice her particularty.

Claud. Does she not seem to be a coy maiden?

Bene. Do you want my sincere and candid opinion, like an honest man; do you want that I should answer you in my usual manner, as one who makes it his declared object to persecute or treat women harshly?

Claud. No; give me your sober and well-considered judgment.

Bene. Well, then, it really seems to me that she is too short to be praised as high, too dark to be prais as fair and too small and insignificant to be made the subject of great praise. The only praise I can give her is that if her features were different from what they are now, she would be positively ugly; as she is, she does not appeal to me.

Claud. I see you think that I am not quite serious; I request you to give me your sincere opinion of her.

Bene. Would you buy her, that you inquire after her.

Claud. Can the world buy such a jewel ?

Bene. Yea, and a *case*[1] to put it into. But speak you this with a *sad*[2] brow? or do you play *the flouting Jack*[3] to tell us Cupid is a good harefinder and *Vulcan*[4] a rare carpenter? Come, in what key shall a man take you *to go in the song?*.[5]

Claud. In mine eye she is the sweetest lady that ever I looked on.

Bene. I can see yet without spectacles and I see *no such matter*[6]: there's her cousin, an she were not possessed with a fury exceeds her as much in beauty as the first of May doth the last of December. But I hope you have no intent to turn husband, have you ?

Claud. I would scarce trust myself, though I had sworn the contrary, if Hero would be my wife.

Bene. Is't come to this? In faith, hate not the world one man but he will *wear his cap with suspicion?*[7] Shall I never see a bachelor of threescore again? *Go to*[8]" faith; an thou wilt needs thrust thy ncek into a yoke, wear the *print*[9] of it and sigh away Sunday. Look ; Don Pedro is returned to seek you.

Re-enter **Don Pedro.**

D. Pedro. What secret hath held you here, that you followed not to Leonato's ?

Bene. I would your grace would constrain me to tell.

D. Pedro. I charge thee *on the allegiance*.[10]

Bene. You hear, Count Claudio: I can be secret as a dumb man; I would have you think so but ; on my all, egiance, mark you this, on my allegiance. He is in love With who ? now that is your grace's part. Mark how short his answer is ;—With Hero. Leonato's short daughter.

Claud. If this were so, *so were it uttered*.[11]

Bene. Like the old tale, my lord; 'it is not so nor 'twas not so, but indeed, God forbid it should be so.'

Claud. If my *Passion*[12] change not shortly, God forbid it should be otherwise.

D. Pedro. Amen, if you love her; for the lady is very well worthy.

Claud. You speak this to *fetch me in*,[13] my lord.

D. Pedro. By my troth, I speak my thought.

1. Jewel-box
2. Serious.
3. A scoffing knave.
4. God of smithy.
5. So as to be in harmony or tune with you.
6. Nothing of the sort.
7. With the fears of having the cuckold's horns on his head.
8. Come ! Come !
9. Mark.
10. In the name of your loyalty to me.
11. So should it be spoken.
12. Love, affection.
13. Entrapme, trick me into a confession

Bene. Do you want all this detailed information in order to have her ?

Claud. Could such a priceless treasure be purchsed with the wealth of the whole universe ?

Bene. Yes, not only the treasure but the case for it too. But tell me if you are speaking seriously or playing the part of an impudent scoffer in giving all this extravagant praise to an ordinary woman, as one who says that Cupid, the blind God of love, is very good at tracking hare and that Vulcan, the blacksmith God, is an excellent worker in wood. Let me know clearly how I am to speak in order to be in harmony or agreement with you.

Claud. To me seems to be the prettiest girl have ever seen.

Bene. I see nothing of the kind in her, and my eyesight is quite good, I being able to see quite clearly without the aid of glasses. Now, her cousin Beatrice, if she had not such a vicious temper, would be as much fairer than she as the bright May-day is fairer than the gloomy December. You have no serious intention of marrying her, have you ?

Claud. I am afraid I would break my vow of celibacy if Hero were to accept me as her husband.

Bene. Is the matter gone so far as that ? Is there no man in the whole world who will avoid marriage and so escape the fear of wearing his cap so as to hide his horns i.e., escape the fear that he has been cuckolded i.e. deceived by his wife. Is there never more to be an old bachelor of sixty ? Well, well: if you must wear the bonds of matrimony, you must show your readiness to do so by your sober and solemn looks and your said puritanical behaviour i.e. you must wear the traditional stamp of the husband. But see ! the Prince has come back for you.

Re-enter **Don Pedro.**

D. Pedro. What is the secret talk between you two, which kept you from following me into Leonato's house ?

Bene. I wish you would force me by your authority to tell you the secret.

D. Pedro I command you in the name of your loyalty to me.

Bene. Do you expect this, Count Claudio? I can keep a secret like a dumb man and I should like you to believe so ; but I am utterly helpless when an appeal is made to my loyalty. Prince, he is in love. You wonder who is the object of his love ? Well, it is for your Grace to ask him that question, and you would then see that his answer would be very short. He loves Hero, Leonato's lovely (short) daughter.

Claud. That is exactly how I would answer the question if it were really true (the allegation of my loving Hero) or if I did love Hero and confided my secret to Benedick, he would most certainly betray it.

Bene, Like the man in the old story when confronted with the truth he evades a confession (of the truth) with the equivocal remark. 'It is not so, nor it was not so, God forbid it should be so.

Claud. No, I donot evade a straight answer; if my feelings do not change very quickly. I say "God forbid it should be otherwise."

Claud. And in faith, my lord, I spoke mine,

Bene. And, by my two faiths and troths, my lord, I spoke mine.

Claud. That I love her, I feel.

D. Pedro. That she is worthy, I know,

Bene. That I neither feel how she should be loved nor know how she should be worthy, is the opinion that fire cannot melt out of me: I will *die in it*[1] at the stake.

D. Pedro. Thou wast ever an obstinate heretic *in the despite*[3] of beauty.

Claud. And never could maintain his part but in *the force of his will.*[3]

Bene. That a woman conceived me, I thank her ; that she brought me up, I likewise give her most humble thanks: but that I will have a *recheat*[4] *winded*[5] in my forehead, or hang my bugle in an invisible *baldrick*,[6] all women shall pardon me. Because I will not do them the wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none; and the *fine is*[7], for the which I may go the *finer*[8], I will live a bachelor.

D. Pedro. I shall see thee, ere I die, look pale with love.

Bene. With anger, with sickness, or with hunger, my lord, not with love; prove that ever I *lose more blood*[9] with love than I will get again with drinking, pick out mine eyes with a *ballad maker's pen*[10] and hang me up at the door of a brothel-house for the sign of blind Cupid.

D. Pedro. Well, if ever thou dost fall from this faith: thou wilt prove a notable argument.

Bene. If I do, hang me in a *bottle*[11] like a cat and shoot at me ; and he that hits me, let *him be clapped on the shoulder and called Adam.*[12]

D. Pedro. Well, as time shall try;
'In time the savage bull doth bear the yoke',

Bene. The savage bull may; but if ever the sensible Benedick bear it, pluck off the bull's horns and set them in my forehead; and let me be vilely painted, and in such great letters as they write 'Here is good horse to hire,' let them signify under my sign 'Here you may see Benedick the married man.'

1. Die maintaining that opinion
2. In your contempt for.
3. By the sheer force of obstinacy
4. A call on the horn in hunting.
5. Sounded blown.
6. A belt.
7. Conclusion.
8. The better clad or dressed.
9. Look bloodless or pale with love.
10. A contemptuous ref. writers of lover-songs.
11. Basket
12. Let him be praised as a framous archer.

D. Pedro. I fully agree with you if you really love her, for the girl is in all respects deserving of your love.

Claud. You only say this to trick me into confessing my real feelings.

D. Pedro. On my honour, I say what I think.

Claud. And, in truth, I also said what I felt.

Bene. By my faith and truth, I also spoke my true thoughts.

Cland. I know that I love her.

D. Pedro. And I know that she fully deserves your love.

Bene. Not even the risk of being burnt to death by fire at the stake can shake my belief that I do not understand how any one should come to be in love with her nor how she is deserving of that love: I am prepared to maintain this opinion at the cost of my life.

D. Pedro. You have persistently refused to worship at the shrine of female beauty i.e. you have always been contemptuous in your attitude towards the fair sex.

Claud. And he could not maintain his heresies about women except by sheer obstinacy.

Bene. I am sincerely thankful to women for giving me birth and bringing me up. But she must forgive me if I refuse to have the cuckold's horn blown on my forehead for all people to hear (i.e. have his shame as a cuckold or deceived husband widely published) or hung in a belt unseen by anybody (*i.e*, hiding the shame from the public eye and enduring it silently). As I do not wish to do injustice to the sex by suspecting any of its members, I will safeguard my honour by trusting none (i.e., by marrying none and thereby giving none of them an opportunity for betraying my honour); and the end of the matter is that I shall live single all my life, the more nicely dressed because I am single and as such free from the burden of an expensive wife.

D. Pedro. I am sure I will see you, before I die, pale with the sickness of love.

Bene. You may see me pale with fury, illness or hunger, never with love : if you can prove that I become so pale with love that wine cannot restore the colour to my cheeks, then you may put my eyes out with the pen of some silly, sentimental love-poet and put me up in front of a brothel as the picture of the blind love-god Cupid for a sign on its signboard.

D. Pedro. If you at any time change your ideas on the subject of love, you will become an excellent subject for ridicule.

Bene. If it comes to that, put me in a coop or basket as a target for everybody to shoot at ; and let the man who hits me with his arrow be congratulated on his skill in archery and be hailed as the champion archer like Adam Bell of the ancient ballad.

D. Pedro. Well, that is a thing which time will prove. Even a fierce bull is tamed in course of time and brought to bear the yoke.

Bene. A fierce bull may; but not a wise man like Benedick; should it even so turn out, plant the bull's horns on my forehead' so as to advertise to the world that I am a cuckold. You can paint an abominable picture of me, hang it up like the sign of an inn with the following legend "Here is Benedick who has married, written in bold letters underneath.

Claud. If this should ever happen, thou wouldst be *hornmad.*[1]

D. Pedro. Nay, if Cupid have not spent all his quiver in Venice, thou wilt quake for this shortly.

Bene. I look for an earthquake too, then.

D. Pedro. Well, you will *temporize with the hours*[2]. In the meantime, good Signior Benedick, repair to Leonato's: commend me to him and tell him I will not fail him at supper; for indeed he hath made great preparation.

Bene. I have almost matter enough in me for such an *embassage,*[3] and so I commit you.

Claud. To the *tuition*[4] of God: From my house, if I had it,

D. Pedro. *The sixth of July*[5] : Your loving friend Benedick.

Bene. Nay, mock not, mock not. The body of your discourse is sometime *guarded*[6] with fragments, and the guards are but slightly basted on neither: ere you *flout old ends*[7] any further, *examine your conscience:*[8] and so I leave you. [*Exit.*

Claud. My liege, your highness now may do me good.

D. Pedro. My love is thine to teach: teach it but howr
And thou shalt see how apt it is to learn
Any hard lesson that may do thee good.

Claud. Hath Leonato any son, my lord?

D. Pedro. No child but Hero ; she's his only heir.
Dost thou *affect*[9] her, Claudio ?

Claud. O, my lord.
When you went onward on this *ended action,*[10]
I look'd upon her with a soldier's eye,
That liked, but had a rougher task in hand
Than to drive liking to the name of love:
But now I am return'd and that war-thoughts
Have left their places vacant, in their *rooms*[11]
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,
All prompting me how fair young Hero is,
Saying, I liked her ere I went to wars.

D. Pedro. Thou wilt be like a lover presently
And tire the hearer with a book of *words.*[12]
If thou dost love fair Hero, cherish it,
And I will *break with her*[13] and with her father

1. A pun; made with jealousy.
2. You will come to terms with or accommodate your self to time i.e. change in course of time
3. Mission.
4. Care, protection.
5. Old Midsummer day.
6. Trimmed
7. Ridicule or mock at old tags.
8. Be careful if you are right.
9. Love care for.
10 Campaign just finished.
11. Room place.
12. Love talk.
13. Discuss the subject, open the subject in talk.

Cland. If such a thing were really to happen, then you would be talking madly.

D. Pedro. If the love-god's shafts have not all been exhausted in Venice, the city of Venice and the centre of amours, and if there be any yet left in his quiver, you will soon pay for this.

Bene, Only an earthquake could make me quake.

D. Pedro. Well. we shall see you accommodate yourself to the times. For the present, my dear fellow, go to Leonato's house and give my compliments to him and tell him on my behalf that I will attend the dinner without fail, for he has prepared a magnificent banquet for us.

Bene. I demand as right that I have sense enough in me to be able to undertake such an important mission, and so I entrust you—(imitating the formal conclusion of a letter).

Claud. To the care of God: written at my house, supposing I had one,-

D. Pedro. On this day, the sixth July (old Midsummer Day—day associated with midsummer madness) ; your affectionate friend, Benedick.

Bene. Nay, do not jest on such a serious matter. The main portion of your conversation is sometimes adorned with odds and end of jokes, tags, quotations *etc.*, which have nothing to do with the subject. Before you mock at old jokes, be careful that they are not applicable to yourself; or you have criticised my speech which is full of old tags: your own talk is full of senseless quotations : be careful that your own conversation is not open to criticism before you proceed to criticise me. [*Exit.*

Claud. My lord, you may now do me a favour.

D. Pedro. You have only to tell me what I can do for you and you will see how my affection for you will conquer all difficulties to help you.

Claud. Has Leonato any son and heir, my lord ?

D. Pedro. Hero is his only child and she will inherit all his wealth. Do you love her seriously Claudio ?

Claud. My lord, when we left for the war which has just been finished, I regarded her with a soldier's feeling; that is, I liked her, but hard military work on my hands prevented my liking from growing into love. But now that I have returned and that my mind is no longer filled with thoughts of war, sweet tender feelings come crowding into my vacant heart, all pointing to Hero's beauty and reminding me of my pre-war liking for her.

D. Pedro. You will soon be like the tedious lover, wearing the listener with whole discourses on love. If you really love Hero, nurse your love for her. I will inform Hero and her father

And thou shalt have her. Was't not to this end
That you began'st to *twist so fine a story*[1]?
Claud. How sweetly you do minister to love,
That know love's grief by his *complexion*[2]!
But lest my liking might too sudden seem,
I would have *salved*[3] it with a longer treatise.
D. Pedro. What need the bridge much broader than the flood?
The fairest grant is the necessity.
Look, what will serve is *fit*;[4] 'tis once, thou lovest,
And I will *fit thee with*[5] the remedy.
I know we shall have revelling to-night;
I will assume thy part in some disguise
And tell fair Hero I am Claudio.
And in her bosom I'll *unclasp my heart*[6]
And take her hearing prisoner with the force
And *strong encounter*[7] of my amorous tale ;
Then after to her father will I *break*[8];
And the *conclusion*[9] is, she shall be thine.
In[10] practice let us put it presently. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *A room in* **Leonato's** *house.*

Enter **Leonato** *and* **Antonio,** *meeting.*

Leon. How now, brother ! Where is my *cousin*,[11] your *son* [12]? hath he provided *this music* [13]?

Ant. He is very busy about it. But, brother, I can tell you strange news that you yet dreamt not of.

Leon. Are they good?

Ant. As the *event*[14] stamps them; but they have a *good cover*[15]; they show well outward. The prince and Count Claudio, walking in a *thickpleached alley*[16] in mine *orchard*,[17] were thus much overheard by a man of mine ; the prince *discovered*[18] to Claudio that he loved my niece your daughter and meant to acknowledge it this night in a dance; and if he found her *accordant*[19], he meant to *take the present time by the top*[20] and instantly break with you of it.

Leon. Hath the fellow any *wit*[21] that told you this?

Ant. A good sharp fellow: I will send for him; and question him yourself.

Leon. No, no ; we will hold it as a dream *till it appear*

1. Work out a story.
2. Appearance, face.
3. Made it smoother, excused.
4. Appropriate, suitable
5. Furnish, provide.
6. Open my heart.
7. Violent attack.
8. Tell her father.
9. The end of the matter.
10. Into.
11. Nephew
12. Mentioned nowhere else in the play.
13. This band of musicians.
14. Result, issue.
15. A good appearance.
16. A thickly interwoven covered walk.
17. Garden
18. Disclosed, revealed.
19. Agreeable.
20. Take time by the forelock.
21. Sense, intelligence.

on the subject and you shall have her. Was it not for this purpose that spun such an excellent story ?

Claud. You know all the signs of a lover and so you gracefully attend to his needs and requirements. For fear lest it should appear that I had fallen in love too quickly and impulsively, I should have liked to declare my passion slowly in a long drawn-out conversation, thus making it smooth and easy of acceptance.

D. Pedro. A bridge need only be just wide enough to span the river. The best gift is that which suits the requirements of the case just the thing needful. (The most suitable is the best). Let one see therefore that what one wants is suitable for him. Enough has been said. You are in love, and I will find you the remedy for it. There will be some masquerading to night : during the masked ball I shall assume a disguise and present my self to Hero as Claudio. I shall pour into her ears such a passionate tale of love as will compel her attention and capture her affection with its force and vehemence. Afterwards I will communicate this to her father, and in the end he will give her to you. Let us proceed immediately to carry out our plan. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *A room in* **Leonato's** *house*

Enter **Leonato** *and* **Antonio,** *meeting.*

Leon. Well, Antonio, where is my nephew? Has he arranged the musical part of the entertainment ?

Ant He is working hard at it. But I can give a surprise.

Leon. An agreeable one ?

Ant. That depends on how things turn out ; at any rate it has a good look about it. One of my servants per chance overheard a talk between Don Pedro and Count Claudio as they strolled along a closely interwoven walk in my garden; and the Prince disclosed to Claudio that he was in love with Hero, and wanted to declare it to her during the revelry, and if he found her agreeable, he would take time by the forelock and without the least delay report the matter to you.

Leon. Has the fellow who gave you this information any sense ?

Ant. Yes, he is a fairly intelligent fellow ? I will produce him before you so that you may ask him yourself about it.

Leon. On the contrary, let us treat the thing as pure fancy till it materialises :

itself[1] : but I will acquaint my daughter withal, that she may be the better prepared for an answer, if peradventure this be true. Go you and tell her of it. [*Enter attendants*] *Cousin*,[2] you know what you have to do. O, I cry you mercy, friend; go you with me, and I will use your skill. Good cousin, have a care this busy time. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *The same.*
Enter **Don John** *and* **Conrade.**

Con. What the good-year,[3] my lord ! why are you thus *out of measure*[4] sad ?

D. John. There is no measure in the occasion that breeds ; therefore the sadness is without limit.

Con. You should hear reason.

D. John. And when I have heard it, what blessing brings it ?

Con. If not *a present*[5] remedy, at least a patient *sufferance*[6].

D. John. I wonder that thou being, as you sayest thou art, born under Saturn, goest about to apply a *moral medicine*[7] to a *mertifying mischief*.[8] I cannot hide what I am; I must be sad when I have cause and smile at no men's jests, eat when I have *stomach*[9] and wait for no man's leisure, sleep when I am drowsy and *tend on*[10] no man's business, laugh when I am merry and *claw*[11] no man *in this humour*[12] ?

Con. Yea, but you must not make the full show of this till you may do it without *controlment*,[13] You have of iate stood out against your brother, and he hath ta'en you newly into his *grace*[14]; where it is impossible you should take true root but by the fair weather that you make yourself : it is needful that you frame the season for your own harvest. 21

D. John. I had rather be a *canker*:[15] in a hedge than a rose in his grace, and it better fits *my blood*[16] to be disdained of all than to *fashion a carriage*[17] to rob love from any : in this, though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man, it must not be denied but I am a plain-dealing villain. I am trusted with a muzzle and enfranchised with a clog; therefore, I have decreed not to sing in my cage. If I had my moth, I would bite ; if I had my liberty, I

1. Till it materialises
2. Antonio's son.
3. An oath : similar to 'what the deuce.'
4. Extremely
5. Immediate.
6. Endurance.
7. A cure consisting in moralising.
8. Deadly or killing disease.
9. Appetite.
10. Wait on
11. Flatter, humour.
12. In his whims and caprices.
13. Restraint, restriction.
14. Favour.
15. A dog-rose or wild rose.
16. Disposition, nature.
17. Shape my conduct

all the same I shall let Hero know about it so that, should there be any truth in it, she may not be taken by surprise. Inform her yourself, will you ? [Enter attendants]. Nephew, you know what your duty is in this matter. I beg your pardon, my friend; come with me, I shall be glad of your help. My dear nephew, do not overwork, yourself during all this pressure of business.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *The Same.*

Enter **Don John** *and* **Conrade**

Con. What is the matter with you, my lord, th at you look so extremely depressed ?

D. John. The cause that has given rise to it has no limits set to it, therefore the misery is also limitless.

Con. You should listen to reason.

D. John. Shall I be prepared for listening to it ?

Con. It will enable you to endure your troubles, even if it does not give you immediate means of escape from them.

D. John. I am surprised that you who, by your own admission, are naturally of a saturnine and morose temperament, should attempt to cure a deadly wound by mere moral talk. I cannot conceal my real nature : I am depressed when there is trouble and I cannot then afford to smile at people's jokes; I must eat when I feel hungry, careless of other people's convenience; I must sleep when I feel like doing so without troubling about other people's affairs; I shall laugh only when I am in a merry mood, and not for the sake of humouring or flattering any body.

Con. Right you are, but you must not openly display your real nature till you can do so unreservedly and without restraint. Only lately you have been a rebel against Don Pedro and have just been restored to his favour; you cannot continue to enjoy his favour unless you create a favourable atmosphere for yourself by accommodating yourself to his ways: it is necessary that you should create opportunities for your own future advancement.

D. John. I would rather remain neglected and unknown like a dog-rose or wild-rose than attain to glory and greatness through my brother's favour. It agrees with my nature better to bear everybody's scorn than to suit my conduct so as to steal anyone's love: in this respect though it cannot be said that I am a good fellow inclined to flattery, yet it must be admitted that at least I am a frank, straightforward rogue. They put perfect trust in me,—yes, after muzzling me like a dog so that I may not speak; they give me full liberty,—yes, after impeding my movement animal-like with a clog. "I am so little trusted that I am like a dog that is muzzzled, or a horse that is nobbled." Therefore, I am like a caged bird, and I refuse to sing i.e., to please my masters I shall not pretend to feeı happy in spite of the restrictions which they choose to impose upon me. If I had the power, I would do them all the harm that I could; if I were free I would act as I pleased: since I cannot do any of

would do my liking; in the meantime let me be that I am and seek not to alter me.

Con. Can you make no use of your discontent ?

D. John. I make all use of it, for I use it only.
Who comes here ?

Enter **Borachio.**

What news, Borachio?

Bora. I came yonder from a great supper: the prince your brother is royally entertained by Leonato ; and I can give you *intelligence*[1] of an intended marriage.

D. John. Will it serve for any *model*[2] to build mischief on ?

What is he for a fool[3] that betroths himself to unquietness?

Bora. Marry. it is your brother's right hand. 41

D. John. Who ? the most exquisite Claudio?

Bora. Even he.

D. John. *A proper squire* [4]! And who, and who ? which way looks he ?

Bora. Marry, on Hero, the daughter and heir of Leonato.

D. John. A very *forward*[5] March-chick ! How come you to this ? 48

Bora. Being *entertained*[6] *for a perfumer*,[7] as I was smoking a musty room, comes me the prince and Claudio, hand in hand, in sad conferenc: I whipt me behind the *arras* [8]; and there heard it agreed upon that the prince should woo Hero for himself, and having obtained her, give her to Count Claudio.

D. John. Come, come, let us thither: this may prove food to my displeasure. That young *start-up*[9] hath all the glory of my overthrow : if I can *cross*[10] him any way, I bless myself every way. You are both *sure*[11], and will assist me ?

Con. To the death, my lord. 59

D. John. Let us to the great supper: their *cheer*[11] is the greater that I am subdued. Would the cook were of my mind ! Shall we go *prove*[12] what's to be done ?

Bora. We'll wait upon your lordship. [*Exeunt.*

1. News.
2. Plan, design.
3. What kind of a fool is he?
4. A fine fellow (ironically)
5. Proco-cious or pre-sumptuous.
6. Engaged as a fumiga-tor.
7. Tapestry.
8. Upstart.
9. Thwart.
10. Reliable; trustworthy.
11. Enjoy-ment.
12. Decide.

these things allow me to appear in my true colours and do not try to make me behave like a hypocrite.

Con. Can not you put your dissatisfaction to some profitable use ?

D. John. I always do it ; indeed I use discontent as my only companion. But some one is coming here.

Enter **Borachio**

I say, Borachio, have you anything to tell us ?

Bora. I have come here direct from the splendid banquet which Leonato is giving in kingly fashion in honour of Don Pedro; I can give you news of a prospective marriage.

D. John. Can it be made the means of harming anybody ? What kind of a fool is he who of his own accord courts troubles by marrying ?

Bora. By the virgin Mary, it is Don Pedro's principal favourite.

D. John. Is it the most excellent and polished Claudio ?

Bora. Yes, he is.

D. John. A fine fellow (ironically)! And who is the lady ? On whom does he cast his love-glances ?

Bora. By Mary, on Hero, Leonato's daughter.

D. John. A very forward, presumptuous youngman ! (if applied to Claudio). A precocious young woman (if applied to Hero).

Bora. I was employed in fumigating a stuffy little room when in came the Prince and Claudio engaged in serious conversation. I hid myself behind the tapestry hangings ; I heard it settled between them Don Pedro was to court Hero and, having won her, was to make her over to Claudio.

D. John. Let us go there at once : this affair may give me an opportunity for satisfying the grudge I bear Claudio. That young upstart was the cause of my downfall and is enjoying all the credit it has brought him. Any chance given to me of thwarting him I shall regard as a blessing conferred on myself. Are you both trust-worthy and will you help me in this ?

Con. We will help you at the risk of our life.

D.John. Let us go to the banquet which is all the more relished by them because of my disgrace. I wish the cook had shared my feelings towards them, for he would then poison them. Let us make our plans.

Bora. We are at your service, my Lord. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

Scene I. *A hall in* Leonato's *house*

Enter **Leonato, Antonio, Hero, Beatrice,** *and others*

Leon. Was not Count John here at supper ?

Ant. I saw him not.

Beat. How *tartly*[1] that gentlemen looks! I never can see him but I am *heart-burned*[2] an hour after.

Hero. He is of a very melancholy disposition.

Beat. He were an excellent man that were made just in the midway between him and Benedick: the one is too like an image and says nothing, and the other too like my *lady's eldest son*,[3] evermore tattling. 9

Leon. Then half Signior Benedick's tongue in Count John's mouth, and half Count John's melancholy in Signior Benedick's face,—

Beat. With a good leg and a good foot, uncle, and money enough in his purse, such a man would win any woman in the world, if a' could get her good-will.

Leon. By my troth, niece, thou wilt never get thee a husband, if thou be so *shrewd*[4] of thy tongue.

Ant. In faith, she's too *curst*.[5]

Beat. Too curst is more than curst : I shall lessen God's sending that way: for it is said, 'God sends a curst cow short horns:' but to a cow too curst he sends none. 21

Leon. So, by being too curst, God will send you no horns.

Beat. *Just*,[6] if he send me no husband: for the which blessing I am at him upon my knees every morning and evening. Lord, I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face; I had rather lie *in the woollen*.[7]

Leon. You may light on a husband that hath no beard.

Beat. What should I do with him ? Dress him in my apparel and make him my waiting-gentlewoman ? He that hath a beard is more than a youth, and he that hath no beard is less than a man : and he that is more than a youth is not for me, and he that is less than a man, I am not for him; therefore I will even take sixpence in earnest of the *bear-ward*,[8] and *lead* his *apes into hell*.[9] 34

Leon. Well, then, go you into hell ?

1. Sour.
2. 'Heart-burn caused by acidity in the stomach.
3. Spoilt child mother's spoilt darling.
4. Bitter, malicious.
5. Bittert shrewd.
6. Exactly.
7. Between the blankets without (smooth) sheets.
8. Bearkeeper, bear-leader.
9. Proverbial punishment for old maids.

ACT II.

Scene I. A hall in Leonato's house.

Enter **Leonato, Antonio, Hero, Beatrice** and others.

Leon. Was not Don John at the feast, ?

Ant. I had not seen him.

Beat, Don John has such sour looks that the mere sight of him brings an indigestion which lasts for an hour.

Hero. Yes, he is naturally very gloomy.

Beat. A man born with a disposition halfway between Don John's and Benedick's would be a very good man. Don John is as a statue, while Benedick is noisy and talkative as a mother's spoild child.

Leon. Then, if we combined some of Benedick's *talkativeness* with some of Don John's seriousness,

Beat. With fine legs and a full purse, such a man would win any lady for his wife.

Leon. By my faith, you will never have a chance for marrying if you use your tongue so sharply.

Ant. Yes, truly she is too bitter !

Beat. One who is also ill-tempered. So I shall go without such a patner which God might otherwise give me, for the saying goes, 'God sends a vicious cow short horns,' but to a cow worse than that, gets none of it.

Leon. So, for being too ill-tempered, you will have no horns.

Beat. Exactly so, unless God sends me a husband; and that He may grant me that favour, I pray day and night. I would not tolerate a husband with a beard. I would rather sleep on woollen blankets without the sheets.

Leon. It is just possible that you should marry a husband without a beard.

Beat. I have no use of such a beardless, fiminine looking husband. Am I to dress him in my clothes and make him my lady's attendent ? The presence of a beard indicates manhood and the absence of beard indicates the want of beard. One who is not a youth *i.e.*, manhood, (who has passed his youth) I will not have ; one who is not a man (*i.e.* lacking in manhood) shall never have me. So I shall accept a job under a bear-keeper, take six pence as earnest-money and lead his monkeys into hell as the punishment for remaining an old maid and thus refusing to bear children.

Leon. Do you mean to say that you are going to hell?

Beat. No, *but*[1] to the gate; and there will the devil meet me, like an old cuckold, with horns on his head, and say 'Get you to heaven, Beatrice, get you heaven; here's no place for you maids' : so deliver I up my apes, and away to Saint Peter for the heavens; he shows me where the bachelors sit, and there live we as *merry*[2] as the day is long.

Ant. [*To Hero*] Well, niece, I trust you will be ruled by your father.

Beat. Yes, faith; it is my cousin's duty to make *curtsy*[3] and say 'Father, as it please you'. But yet for all that, cousin, let him be a handsome follow, or else make another curtsy and say 'Father, as it please me.'

Leon. Well, niece, I hope to see you one day *fitted with*[4] a husband.

Beat. Not till God make men of some other *metal*[5] than earth. Would it not grieve a woman to be overmastered with a piece of valiant dust ? to make an account of her life to *a cold of way-ward marl*[6] ? No, uncle, *I'll none*[7] : Adam's sons are my brethren: and, truly, I hold it a sin to match in my kindred.

Leon. Daughter, remember what I told you: if the prince do solicit you *in that kind*[8], you know your answer.

Beat. The fault will be in the music, cousin, if you be not wooed in good time ; if the prince be too *important*[9], tell him there is *measure*[10] in everything and so dance out the answer. For, hear me, Hero: wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as *aScotch jig*,[11] a measure, and *a cinque pace:*[12] the first *suit*[13] is hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding mannerlymodest, as a measure, full of *state*[14] and *ancientry*[15]; and then comes repentance and, with his *bad legs*[16], falls into the cinque pace faster and faster, till he sink into his grave.

Leon. Cousin, you *apprehend*[17] *passing shrewdly.*[18]

Beat. I have a good eye, uncle; I can see a church by daylight.

Leon. The revellers are entering, brother; make good *room.*[19]

[*All put on their masks.*]

1. Only.
2. Happy.
3. Low bow made by women.
4. Married to.
5. Material, stuff.
6. A lump of wilful and arbitrary clay or earth
7. I will have none of them.
8. In that way, i.e. marriage.
9. Importunate.
10. (1). Moderation (2) a slow and stately dance.
11. A lively dance.
12. A five-step active dance, galliard.
13. Courtship, wooing.
14. Dignity, stateliness.
15. Old-fashioned dignity or formality.
16. Weak and tottering legs.
17. Understand.
18. Extremely, keenly.
19. Space.

Beat. No; I shall only go up to the entrance where the Devil, looking like a deceived husband because of his horns, will meet me and will ask me to go straight to heaven as the right place for old maids is not hell but heaven. Then I shall make over my monkeys to him and hasten to St. Peter to request him to admit me to heaven ; heaven being the place for unmarried people, he will show me where the bachelors are, and we shall all live happily there.

Ant. [To niece] I hope, niece, that you will faithfully obey your father's wishes in this matter.

Beat. Of course, she must, because as a dutiful and submissive child she will humbly bow down to her father's wishes. Yet, cousin, see that your bridegroom is good-looking. If not, then with another bow tell your father that in choosing a husband you will please me (Hero).

Leon. I hope to see you also, Beatrice, married to a desirable husband in the near future.

Beat. Not before men are made of better stuff than at present. It is not a pity that a woman should be dominated by a man made wholly of dust, be answerable for all her actions to a lump of wilfui and arbitrary earth ? No, uncle, I will have none of these for my husband; nay, I will not marry at all, for I consider it immoral to marry one's own relations, and all men, being descended from Adam, our common ancestor, are my kith and kim.

Leon. Hero, do not forget my instructions to you. If Don Pedro proposes to you, you know your answer.

Beat. If you are not courted at the right moment and at a regulated pace tonight, it will be because the music is out of time. If Don Pedro is too importunate, remind him that just as there is measure or rethem in music so must there be rethem in his love also. So give him your answer by dancing a stately dance with slow and measured steps. Courtship is like the lively Scottish dance; marriage is like a slow, stately dance; the regret that inevitably follows marriage is like a 'five-step' dance. The first wooing is impetuous and whimsical like a Scotch dance; the marriage, serious and sober like a stately dance, full of courtly dignity and antique formality; then repentance, like the five-step dance, with tottering steps, goes on quickening its pace till at last it reaches a solemn finale.

Leon. You are surpassingly clever and understand things very quickly, niece.

Beat. Yes, uncle. I am a fairly keen observer ; I can see a thing when it is clearly before my eyes !

Leon. Here are the masqueraders; let us give space enough for them. [All put on their masks.]

Enter **Don Pedro, Claudio, Benedick, Balthasar, Don John, Borachio, Margaret, Ursula,** *and others, masked.*

D. Pedro. Lady, will you walk about with your *friend*[1] ?

Hero. *So*,[2] you walk softly and look sweetly and say nothing, I am yours for the walk; and especially when I walk away.

D. Pedro. With me in your company ?

Hero. I may say so, when I please.

D. Pedro. And when please you to say so ?

Hero. When I like your *favour*[3]; for God defend the lute should be like the case !

D. Pedro. My *visor*[4] is Philemon's roof; within the house is Jove.

Hero. Why, then, your visor should be thatched.

D. Pedro. Speak low, if you speak love.

[*Drawing her aside.*

Balth. Well, I *would*[5] you did like me.

Marg. So would not I, for your own sake; for I have many ill qualities.

Balth. Which is one ?

Marg. I say my prayers aloud.

Balth. I love you the better : the hearers may cry Amen.

Marg. God match me with a good dancer !

Balth. Amen.

Marg. And God keep him out of my sight when the dance is done ! Answer, *clerk*[6].

Balth. No more words: the clerk is answered.

Urs. I know you will enough ; you are Signior Antonio.

Ant. *At* a *word*,[7] I am not.

Urs. I know you by the waggling of your head.

Ant. To tell true, I *counterfeit*[8] him.

Urs. You could never *do him so ill-well*,[9] unless you were the very man. Here's his dry hand *up and down*[10]: you are he, you are he.

Ant. At a word, I am not.

Urs. Come, come, do you think I do not know you by your excellent wit? can virtue hide itself ? *Go to, mum*[11], you are he: graces will appear, and there's *an end*.[12]

Beat. Will you not tell me who told you so ?

1. Lover.
2. Provided.
3. Face, appearance.
4. Mask.
5. Wish.
6. The reader of the responses in the English Church Service.
7. Plainly, to one word.
8-Imitate.
9-Imittate. his bad habit so perfectly.
10-(1)Moving exactly in the same way (2) completely, In all details.
11. Come, come, that it enough.
12. There is an end of it; no more to be said.

Enter Don Pedro, Claudio, Benedick, Balthasar, Don John, Borachio, Margaret, Ursula, and others, masked.

D. Pedro. Your lover requests the favour of your company, dear lady.

Hero. I am glad to come with you provided you walk slowly and remain silent; specially when I move away from you.

D. Pedro. Will you have me as your companion when you move away ?

Hero. Leave that to me, please.

D. Pedro. When will you decide the matter ?

Hero. When I like your face ; God forbid that your face should be as ugly as your mask !

D. Pedro. My mask is like the poor hut of Philemon and Baucis, for just as their humble shed contained Jove, so my ugly mask conceals something better and fairer than is indicated by the ugly exterior.

Hero. If your mask is like the cottage, it must be thatched.

D. Pedro. Speak in a low voice, if you want to speak of love. [Pulling her aside].

Balth. I wish you could love me.

Marg. But I do not wish it in your own interest, for I have many undesirable features in my character.

Balth. For example ?

Marg. I pray loudly so that it is heard by everybody.

Balth. I love you all the more, for in that case all those who hear the prayers may say 'Amen'.

Marg. One of my prayers is: "May God give me a good dancing partner.

Balth. "Amen".

Marg. "And may God take him away from my presence as soon as the dance is over." Well, Sir Clerk, respond to this prayer.

Balth. Enough of this; I am silenced by you.

Urs. I am sure, you are Antonio.

Ant. In a word, I am not.

Urs. I recognise you by the movement of your head.

Ant. As a matter of fact, I am imitating Antonio.

Urs. One could never represent a man by copying his defects so perfectly unless one were the man himself. Your old bony hand moves exactly like his. I am sure you are Antonio.

Ant. No, in brief, I am not.

Urs. Enough! I recognise you by your clever talk. True worth must show itself, however much one may try to disguise it. No more of it! You are the very same man. A man's finer qualities

Bene. No, you *shall*[1] pardon me.

Beat. Nor will you not tell me who you are?

Bene. Not now.

Beat. That I was disdainful, and that I had my good wit out of the 'Hundred Merry Tales': well, this was Signior Benedick that said so.

Bene. *What's he*?[2]

Beat. I am sure you know him well enough.

Bene. Not I, believe me.

Beat. Did he never make you laugh?

Bene. I pray you, what is he?

Beat. Why, he is the prince's *jester*[3]: a very dull fool; *only his gift*[4] is in devising *impossible*[5] slanders: none but *libertines*[6] delight in him; and the commendation is not in his wit, but in his villany; for he both pleases men and angers them, and then they laugh at him and beat him. I am sure he is in the *fleet*[7]: I would he had *boarded*[8] me.

Bene. When I know the gentleman, I'll tell him what you say.

Beat. Do, do: he'll but break a *comparison*[9] or two on me: which, peradventure not marked or not laughed at, strikes him into melancholy; and then there's partridge wing saved, for the fool will eat no supper that night. [*Music.*] We must follow the *leaders*.[10]

Bene. In every good thing.

Beat. Nay, if they lead to any ill, I will leave them at the next turning.

[*Dance. Then exeunt all except Don John, Borachio, and Claudio.*

D. John. Sure my brother is *amorous on*[11] Hero and hath withdrawn her father to *break*[12] with him about it. The ladies follow her and but *one visor*[13] remains.

Bora. And that is Claudio: I know him by his bearing.

D. John. Are not you Signior Benedick?

Claud. You know me well; I am he.

D. John. Signior, you are *very near*[14] my brother in his love: he is *enamoured*[15] on Hero; I pray you, dissuade him from her: she is no *equal*[16] for his birth you may do the part of an honest man in it.

1. Must, will have to.
2. What kind of man is he.
3. Fool, clown.
4. His only gift.
5. Incredible, unbelievable.
6. Immoral young men.
7. Company
8. Accosted, addressed.
9. Jest, joke.
10. Leaders of the dance, first couple.
11. In love with.
12. Talk, discuss.
13. One masked person.
14. Attached to, in the confidence of.
15. Inspired with love. infatuated with.
16. That is, in respect of.

are bound to manifest themselves: there is nothing more to be said on the sucject.

Beat. Please tell me who gave you this information.

Bene. Excuse me, I must not tell you.

Beat. May I know to whom I am talking ?

Bene. Excuse me, at present I cannot tell you that even.

Beat. It must have been Benedick who told you that I was haughty and that I got all my smart sayings out of 'Hundred Merry Tales'.

Bene. To whom are you referring ?

Beat. Come, come, it is no use pretending ignorance.

Bene. I speak the truth, I do not know the man.

Beat. Has he never made you to laugh.

Bene. Do please tell me who this man **Benedick** is.

Beat. Well, he is Don Pedro's professional fool but he is not in the least amusing ; his only quality is his power of inventing absurd calumnies against people ; no one loves his company except immoral youngmen. "It is his wickedness rather than his wit that is enjoyed, for they all enjoy his libels upon others and resent his libels upon themselves, so that he gets both applause and detestation." I am confident he is in this gathering: I wish he had spoken to me so that I might tell him what I think of him.

Bene. When I meet him I will tell him what you have said about him.

Beat. I do not mind: he will only make a little fun at my expense which, if not taken notice of by anybody, will throw him into a fit of dejection: thus a dish of partridge—wing will be saved, for the silly man will eat no dinner that night. [Music] Now, I suppose, we must follow the leaders of the dance.

Bene. Yes, we are to follow them as long as they lead us to right direction.

Beat. Of course; if they go in the wrong direction, I shall leave them at the next change in the direction.

[*Dance. Then exeunt all except* **Don John, Borachio**

and **Claudio.**]

D. John. I am sure Don Pedro is madly in love with Hero and has retired with her father to speak to him about the matter. All her attendants have also withdrawn, and only one masked person remains here.

Bora. He is Count Claudio, I recognise him by his deportment.

D. John. I suppose you are Signior **Benedick**, Sir ?

Claud. Yes, I am: you know me too well to make a mistake.

D. Jonh. You are so much in the confidence of my brother as to know that he is deeply in love with Hero: Please try to free him from this love afair, for she is below him in rank. In this matter you will be acting like an honourable person.

Claud. How know you he loves her ?

D. John. I heard him swear his affection.

Bora. So did I too; and he swore he would marry her to-night.

D. John. Come, let us to the *banquet*[1].

Exeunt Don John and Borachio

Claud. Thus answer I in name of Benedick,
But hear these ill news with the ears of Claudio.
'Tis certain so; the prince wooes for himself.
Friendship is constant in all other things.
Save in the *office*[2] and affairs of love:
Therefore all hearts in love *use*[3] their own tongues ;
Let every eye negotiate for itself.
And trust no agent; for beauty is a witch.
Against whose charms faith melteth into *blood*[4],
This is *an accident of hourly proof*[5].
Which I *mistrusted*[6] not. Farewell, therefore, Hero !

Re-enter **Benedick.**

Bene. Count Claudio ?

Claud. Yea, the same.

Bene. Come, will you go with me ?

Claud. Whither ?

Bene. Even to the next *willow*[7], about your own business, *county*[8]. What fashion will you wear the *garland*[9] of ? about your neck, like an usurer's chain?or under your arm, like a lieutenant's scarf ? You must wear it one way, for the prince hath got your Hero.

Claud. I wish him joy of her.

Bene. Why, that's spoken like an honest *drovier*[10]: so they sell bullocks. But did you think the prince would have served you thus ?

Claud. I pray you, leave me.

Bene. Ho ! now you strike like the blind man:' twas the boy that stole your meat, and you'll beat the post.

Claud. If it will not be, I'll leave you. [*Exit.*

Bene. Alas, poor hurt fowl ! now will he creep into sedges. But that my Lady Beatrice should know me, and not know me ! The prince's fool ! Ha ! It may be I go under that title because I am merry. Yea, but so I am apt to do myself wrong; I am not so reputed: it is the

1. Feast.
2. Business, Service.
3. Let them use.
4. Passion.
5. An incident which may be verified any time, everyday experience.
6. Suspected.
7. Emblem of unhappy love.
8. Count.
9. Garland made of willow.
10. Cattle drover or dealer.

Claudio. By what means have you come to know that he is in love with her ?

D. John. I overhead him solemnly professing his love for her.

Bora. I heard him too ; he declared that he would marry her this very night.

D. John. Let us now attend the feast.

[*Exeunt* **Don John and Borachio.**]

Claud. I assumed the name of **Benedick**, but the evil news I have heard touches me as Claudio. Yes, it must be true that Don Pedro is courting Hero to make her his own wife. Friends are tustworthy in all affairs except in those of love. So let every one court for himself and not depend upon another for arranging his love affairs for him. Before the witchery of beauty, honour gives way to passion. This is our daily experience, yet I way unsuspecting. So I bid good-bye to Hero.

Re-enter **Benedick**

Bene. Are you Count Claudio ?

Claud. Yes, I am he.

Bene. Will you please come with me for a little while ?

Claud. Where ?

Bene. To the nearest willow tree, the symbol of the unhappy lover, about your love affair. How will you wear the garland, deserted lover? Round your neck like the money-lenders' gold chain, or over one shoulder like a soldier's sling ? You must wear this token garland, because Don Pedro has stolen Hero's affections form you.

Claud. My congratulations to the Prince !

Bene. Your speech sounds like the recommendation of a cattle-dealer when he sells a beast. But did you ever expect such treatment at the hands of Don Pedro ?

Claud. Please go away, leave me lone.

Bene. Now you are angry with the wrong person like the blind man who in his blindness struck the post instead of the boy who had stolen his meat.

Claud. Since you will not do as I sak you, I must go. [Exit.

Bene. Alas ! poor man ! now he retires into solitude as the wounded water-fowl hides itself among the reeds. Is it not very strange that Beatrice should know me so well, yet not be able to recognise me when I was before her in person ? She called me the prince's jester, too. Perhaps they call me so because of my mirthful disposition. But no, I am doing myself an injustice; I am not known by that name at all. It is the malicious, cunning nature of Beatrice

base, though bitter, disposition of Beatrice that *puts the world into her person*[1] and so *gives me out*[2]. Well, I'll be revenged as I may.

Re-enter **Don Pedro.**

D. Pedro. Now, signior, where's the count ? did you see him ? 188

Bene. Troth, my lord, I have *played the part of Lady Fame*[3]. I found him here as melancholy *as a lodge in a warren*[4]. I told him, and I think I told him true, that your grace had *got the good will*[5] of *this young lady*[6], and I offered him my company to a willow-tree, either to make him a garland, as being forsaken, or to *bind him up a rod*[7], as being worthy to be whipped.

D. Pedro. To be whipped ! What's his fault ?

Bene. The *flat transgression*[8] of a school-boy, who, being overjoyed with finding a bird's nest, shows it his companion, and *he*[9] steals it.

D. Pedro. Wilt thou make a trust a transgression ? The transgression is in the stealer. 201

Bene. Yet it had not been amiss the rod had been made, and the garland too ; for the garland he might have worn himself, and the rod he might have bestowed on you, who, as I take it, have stolen his bird's nest.

D. Pedro. I will but teach *them*[10] to sing, and restore them to the owner.

Bene. If their singing answer your saying, by my faith, you say honestly. 209

D. Pedro. The Lady Beatrice hath a *quarrel to you*[11] : the gentleman that danced with her told her she is much wronged by you.

Bene. O, she *misused*[12] me past the endurance of a block ! an oak *but with one green leaf on it*[13] would have answered her; my very visor began to assume life and *scold with her*[14]. She told me, not thinking I had been myself, that I was the prince's jester, that I was duller than a great thaw; *huddling*[15] jest upon jest with such *impossible conveyance*[16] upon me that I stood like a man at a mark, with a whole army shooting at me. She speaks *poniards*,[17] and every word stabs: if her breath were as terrible as her

1. "Assumes to represent the world".
2. Describes me, reports me.
3. Performed the function of Dame Rumour in reporting to him.
4. A gamekeeper's hut in a wilderness and so melancholy.
5. Won the love.
6. Hero.
7. A rod made up of twigs.
8. Downright fully.
9. The companion.
10. The young birds.
11. A complaint against you.
12. Abused.
13. Hardly alive.
14. Absue her in return.
15. Heaping together confusedly.
16. Incredible dexterity, extraordinary sharpness.
17. Daggers.

which expresses opinions as though they were the whole world's and so describes me as a fool. I must be avenged on her somehow or other.

Re-enter Don Pedro.

D. Pedro. Well, sir, where is Claudio? Have you seen him?

Bene. Really, sir, I have played the role of Dame Romaur in spreading the report current about him. I came upon him here looking as cheerless and sad as a keeper's hut in a wilderness; I informed him, and correctly, I think, that you had won Hero's love. I undertook to take him to a willow-tree either to find a garland of mourning for him or else a rob of willow-twigs to whip him with.

D. Pedro. Why, what has he done calling for a whipping ?

Bene. In entrusting to you the courting of Hero he has perpetrated a piece of downright folly like the schoolboy who, beside himself with joy at the unexpected discovery of a bird's nest, takes into confidence his friend who at once robs him of it.

D. Pedro. Is it folly to trust a friend ? The treacherous friend is at fault, not the friend who trusts him.

Bene. Then it would not have been wrong to make both the rod and the garland ; the garland he might have kept for himself and the rod he might have applied you who robbed him of his love.

D. Pedro. I do not wish to marry Hero myself. I shall return her to Claudio after teaching her how to please him.

Bene. If her attitude towards Claudio corresponds to what you promise on her behalf, then I shall say that you are a faithful friend.

D. Pedro. Lady Beatrice has a complain against you ; her dancing partner informed her that you said all kinds of wicked things about her and thereby misrepresented her character.

Bene. Not even a block of wood could have patiently put up with the abuse she heaped upon me ! Even an old dry oak tree with the least vitality left in it would have been driven to retort; even my mask shook with passion and tried to return her abuse. She told me, not recognising me as Benedick under my mask, that I was Don Pedro's buffoon and not even witty at that, being more gloomy than the weather on a cloudy day after a frost; she levelled jokes and witty remarks at me with such incredible dexterity that I stood exposed to her shafts like a target for all the soldiers to shoot at. Her words are sharp as a dagger and they wound severely ; if her breath were as foul as her words, no one would be able to go near her; she would

terminations,[1] there were no living near her; she would infect to the *north star*.[2] I would not marry her, though she were endowed with all that Adam had left him before he transgressed; she would have made Hercules have turned spit, yea, and have cleft his club to make the fire too. Come, talk not of her: you shall find her the infernal *Ate*[3] in good apparel. I would to God *some scholar*[4] would conjure her; for certainly, *while she is here*[5], a man may live as quiet in hell as in a *sanctuary*[6]; and people sin upon purpose, because they would go thither; so indeed, all disquiet, horror and *perturbation*[7] follows her.

D. Pedro. Look, here she comes.

Enter **Claudio, Beatrice, Hero,** *and* **Leonato.**

Bene. Will your grace command me any service to the world's end? I will go on the slightest errand now to the Antipodes that you con devise to send me on; I will fetch you a *toothpicker*[8] now from the farthest inch of Asia, bring you the length of *Prester John's*[9] foot, fetch you a hair off the *great Cham's*[10] beard, do you any *emabssage*[11] to the *Pigmies*[12], rather than hold three words' conference with this harpy. You have no employment for me?

D. Pedro. None, but to desire your good company.

Bene. O God, sir, here's a dish I love not: I cannot endure my *Lady Tongue*[13]. [*Exit.*

D. Pedro. Come, lady, come; you have lost the heart of Signior Benedick.

Beat. Indeed, my lord, he lent it me awhile: and I gave him *use*[14] for it, a double heart for his single one: marry, once before he won it of me with false dice, therefore your grace may well say I have lost it.

D. Pedro. You have *put him down*[15], lady, you have put him down.

Beat. So I would not he should do me, my lord. I have brought Count Claudio, whom you sent me back to seek.

D. Pedro. Why, how now, count! wherefore are you sad?

Claud. Not sad, my lord.

D. Pedro. How then? sick?

Claud. Neither, my lord.

1. Terms, words.
2. The pole-star thought to be the most distant.
3. Goddess of strife or discord.
4. Some one learned in Latin.
5. While she is on earth.
6. An asylum.
7. Disturbance.
8. Dentist
9. Presbyter, Priest John, legendary king of the far East.
10. The Khan ol Tatar.
11. Mission.
12. A mythical race of dwarfs
13. Chatterbox, Lady, Talkative.
14. Interest.
15. Floored him, overthrown him.

befoul the air up to the north pole. I would not make her my wife, even if her wealth were as great as that which Adam possessed before his fall. Had she been Hercules's mistress Omphale, she would have made her great lover Hercules turn this spit in her kitchen as Omphale made him turn the spinning-wheel (i.e. do all kinds of mean domestic work), and she would have split up his mighty club to be used as fuel for her fire. Let us stop talking about her; she is the veritable goddess of strife in decent clothes. I wish some one learned in Latin would exercise the evil spirit by which she is possessed; "to live in hell would be as quiet as to live in a church, compared to living where she is, and people sin purposely in order to escape her in that way"; for there is nothing but no peace, disturbance and disorder in her neighbourhood.

D. Pedro. See, here is lady in person.

Re-enter **Claudio, Beatrice, Hero** *and* **Leonato.**

Bene. Do please send me on some mission to the farthest place on earth! I will gladly go to the opposite side of the globe on the slightest work that your Highness can think of; will bring you, if you please, a toothpick from the most distant corner of Asia, measure the length of the foot of Prester (Presbyter) John, the mythical Christian king of India or Abyssinia, pull off for you a hair of the Khan of Tatar's beard, will even visit the race of dwarfs dwelling beyond Mt. Imaus in India described by Homer to escape the necessity of exchanging even three words with this sharp-tongued tormenting woman. Could you not give me a commission?

D. Pedro. No, I have no errand for you and I wish that you should give me the pleasure of your company.

Bene. No, sir, I cannot stand this woman who is all tongue-my Talkative Lady. [*Exit*

D. Pedro. Well, lady, you have lost Signior Benedick's heart.

Beat. Yes, your Grace, I had Benedick's heart for a time; but I gave it back to him with interest for I returned him two, my own heart as well as his, for the one he had lent me; but my part in it he won by false pretences; so you may say that I have lost it.

D. Pedro. You have over-thrown him, lady, in this wordy encounter.

Beat. I do not like that he should do the same to me, for fear lest I should give birth to fools. But here is Count Claudio whom I was asked to bring.

D. Pedro. I say, Claudio, why are you gloomy?

Claud. I am not sad.

D. Pedro. Are you ill, then?

Claud. Not that, my lord.

Beat. The count is neither sad, nor sick, nor merry, nor well; but *civil*[1], count, *civil as an orange*,[2] and something of that *jealous complexion*.[3]

D. Pedro. I' faith, lady, I think your *blazon*[4] to be true; though, I'll be sworn, if he be so, his *conceit*[5] is false. Here, Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and fair Hero is won : I have *broke* with her father, and his good will obtained : name the day of marriage, and God give thee joy !

Leon. Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my *fortunes*:[6] his grace hath made the match, and *all grace*[7] say Amen to it.

Beat. Speak, count, 'tis your *cue*[8].

Claud. Silence is the perfectest *herald*[9] of joy : I were but little happy, if I could say how much. Lady, as you are mine, I am yours: I give away myself for you and dote upon *the exchange*.[10]

Beat. Speak, cousin; or, if you cannot, stop his mouth with a kiss, and let not him speak neither.

D. Pedro. In faith, lady, you have a merry heart.

Beat. Yea, my lord: I thank it, poor fool, it keeps on the *windy side*[11] or care. My cousin tell him in his ear that he is in her heart.

Claud. And so she doth, cousin.

Beat. *Good Lord. for alliance* ![12] Thus *goes* every one *to the world*[13] but I, and I am *sunburnt*;[14] I may sit in a corner and cry *heigh-ho for a husband* ![15]

D. Pedro. Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

Beat. I would rather have one of your father's *getting*[16]. Hath your grace ne'er a brother like you ? Your father got excellent husbands. If a maid could come by them.

D. Pedro. Will you have me lady !

Beat. No, my lord, unless I might have another for *working days* ;[17] your grace is too costly to wear every day. But I beseech your grace, pardon me: I was born to speak all mirth and *no matter*,[18]

D. Pedro. Your silence most offends me, and to be merry best becomes you: for, *out of question*,[19] you were born in a merry hour.

1. Grave, Sober.
2. A pun on 'Seville both sweet and sour, merry and sad.
3. Yellow- the symbol of jealousy.
4. Heraldic term for a coat of arms : here description.
5. Idea.
6. All my estate.
7. God, the source of grace.
8. Turn to speak.
9. Harbinger, messenger.
10. The thing obtained in exchange.
11. Safe side.
12. (1) Good lord. here I have got a new kingman by marriage (2) a wish for a husband.
13. Gets married.
14. Tanned, hence without attiactions
15. Title of a popular folk-song.
16. Begetting.
17. Reserving you for Sundays and holidays.
18. No sense, no substance.
19. Doubtless.

Beat. Count Claudio is neither sorrowful nor merry, neither ill nor well; but bitter-sweet, like an orange (a mixture of both), whose yellow colour is a symbol of jealousy.

D. Pedro. Truly; your description of him seems to be correct; though. I prmise you, if he be really jealous, his idea is wrong and foolish. See, count, I have courted Hero for you and have won her; I have also spoken to her father and won his approval as well: the only thing left to you to do now is to fix the day of marriage, and may God give happiness to you.

Leon. Count Claudio, I give away to you my daughter Hero and all my wealth as dowry. His Grace the Prince has settled this marriage and may God, the fountain of grace, bless it.

Beat. Claudio, it is your turn to speak now.

Claud. When the heart is full of joy, words are few: if my joy were less than what it is, I would be able to express it fully in words. Hero, I exchange my heart with yours and I am delighted by what I get.

Beat. Say something in reply, Hero; if you cannot then prevent him from speaking by kissing him.

D. Pedro. Truly Beatrice, you possess a jolly nature.

Bear. Yes, your Highness, I own it to my nature that I am always on the safe side, the side, away from that where there is care. See, Hero is now whispering to him how deeply she loves him.

Claud. Right you are, Beatrice, she is really doing so.

Beat. (1) 'Heaven send me a marriage, too. (2) 'Good Lord, here have I got a new kinsman by marriage'. Thus do all women get married except myself: my complexion being tanned by the sun, I am without attractions and so not likely to find a husband. Lonely and cheerless, I sit crying for a husband like the maids in the old ballad.

D. Pedro. Beatrice, don't you worry, I shall get a husband for you.

Beat. I should like to have a husband whom your father begot. One of your brothers very much like yourself. Your father's sons would make ideal husbands, if only poor girls like myself could secure them.

D. Pedro. Then why not have me for a husband?

Beat. No, your Highness, unless I could have a second husband for daily life: your grace is too grand for common everyday use. But, pray, do not be angry at my chatter; I am by nature given to saying something funny which has hardly any sense in it.

D. Pedro. I dislike your silence; your gay, light-hearted talk suits you perfectly well; for doubtless you were born at a moment favourable to mirth.

Beat. No, sure, my lord, my mother cried, but then there was a star danced, and under that was I born. Cousins, God give your joy !

Leon. Niece, will you look to those things I told you of ?

Beat. I *cry you mercy*[1], uncle. By your grace's pardon. [*Exit.*

D. Pedro. By my troth, a pleasant-spirited lady.

Leon. There's little of the melancholy element in her, my lord: she is never sad but when she sleeps, and not ever sad then; for I have heard my daughter say, she hath often dreamed of *unhappiness*[2] and waked herself with laughing.

D. Pedro. She cannot endure to hear tell of a husband.

Leon. O, by no means : she mocks all her wooers *out of suit.*[3]

D. Pedro. She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

Leon. O Lord, my lord, if they were but a week married, they would talk themselves mad.

D. Pedro. County Claudio, when mean you to *go to church* [4]?

Claud. To-morrow, my lord : time *goes on crutches*[5] till love have all his *rites*[6].

Leon. Not till Monday, my dear son, which is hence a *just seven-night*[7]: and a time too brief too, to have all things *answer my mind*[8].

D. Pedro. Come, you shake the head at so long a *breathing*[9] : but, I warrant thee, Claudio' the time shall not go dully by us. I will in the interim undertake *one of Hercules' labours*[10]: which is, to bring Signior Benedick and the Lady Beatrice into *a mountain of affection*[11] the one with the other. I would fain *have it a match*[12] and I doubt not but to fashion it, if you three will but minister such assistance as I shall give you direction.

Leon. My lord, I am *for*[13] you, though it cost me ten nights' *watching*[14].

Claud. And I, my lord.

D. Pedro. And you too, gentle Hero?

1. Beg your pardon.
2. Misery, misfortune.
3. A legal quibble non-suits her suitors, putting out of court.
4. Get married.
5. Goes very slowly
6. Ceremonies.
7. Exactly a week.
8. Meet my wishes.
9. Delay.
10. A task of tremendous difficulty.
11. Very great affection.
12. See them married.
13. With.
14. Keeping awake.

Beat. Not at all, your Highness, for mother cried at my birth: a dancing star was in the ascendant when I was born, hence I am merry, Hero and Claudio, may God make you happy !

Leon. Will you please attend to those things I spoke to you about, Beatrice ?

Beat. I beg your pardon, uncle, for forgetting it. Excuse me, your Highness. [*Exit.*

D. Pedro. She is indeed full of wit and mirth.

Leon. True,my Lord; there is no sadness in her disposition; she is never melancholy except when she is asleep; but even then she is not melancholy ; for Hero has told me that she would awake laughing immediately after a bad dream.

D. Pedro. She cannot bear the talk of marriage.

Leon. No, she puts all her suitors out of court and routs them by her mockery.

D. Pedro. She would be just the wife for Benedick.

Leon. My God, they will drive each other mad by their ceaseless chatter within a week of their marriage.

D. Pedro. When do you intend to be married, Count Claudio ?

Claud. To morrow, your Grace; time passes very slowly with lovers till they are married.

Leon. No, my dear Claudio, you cannot marry before Monday which is exactly a week from today; and even that is too short a space of time to make all preparations according to my wishes.

D. Pedro. You look depressed at the prospect of such a delay: but I assure you the time will not hang heavy on our heads. During the interval I propose to perform a task as difficult as those of Hercules, and that is to make Beatrice and Benedick madly fall in love with each other. I should very much like to see them married, and I am sure I could bring it about if the three of you were to give me such assistance as I would ask you for.

Leon. I am with you, my Lord, though it will mean going without sleep many a night.

Claud. So am I too, your Highness.

D. Pedro. May I not count upon your assistance, sweet lady ?

Hero. I will do any *modest office*,[1] my lord, to help my cousin to a good husband.

D. Pedro. And Benedick is not *unhopefullest*[2] husband that I know. Thus far can I praise him ; he is of a noble *strain*,[3] of *approved*[4] valour end confirmed honesty. I will teach you how to humour your cousin, that she shall fall in love with Benedick ; and I, with *your two helps*,[5] will so *practise*[6] on Benedick that, in despite of his quick wit and his *queasy stomach*,[7] he shall fall in love with Beatrice. If we can do this, Cupid is no longer an archer: his glory shall be ours, for we are the only love-gods. Go in with me, and I will tell you *my drift*[8]. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *The same*

Enter **Don John** *and* **Borachio.**

D. John. It is so; the Count Claudio shall marry the daughter of Leonato.

Bora. Yea, my lord; but I can cross it.

D. John. Any bar, any cross, any *impediment*[9] will be *medicinable*[10] to me; I am sick in displeasure to him, and whatsoever comes athwart his *affection*[11] *ranges evenly*[12] with mine. How canst thou cross this marriage ?

Bora. Not honestly, my lord ; but so *covertly*[13] that no dishonesty shall appear in me.

D. Jonh. Show me briefly how. 10

Bora. I think I told your lordship a year *since*[14]. how much I am in the favour of Margaret the waiting gentlewoman to Hero.

D. John. I remember.

Bora. I can, at any *unseasonable instant*[15] *of the night, appoint*[16], her to look out at her lady's chamber window.

D. John. What life is in that, to be the death of this marriage. 18

Bora. The poison of that lies in you to *temper*[17]. Go you to the prince your brother: spare not to tell him that he hath wronged his honour in marrying the renowned Claudio whose *estimation*[18] do you mightily hold up-to a *contaminated stale*[19], such a one as Hero.

D. John. What proof shall I *make*[20] of that ?

Bora. Proof enough to *misuse*[21] the prince, to *vex*[22] Claudio, to undo Hero, and kill Leonato. *Look you for*[23] any other issue ? 27

1. Anything consistent with maidenliness.
2. Worst, most unpromising.
3. Lineage, stock.
4. Proved, tried.
5. Help of you two.
6. Work, play tricks.
7. Fastidious taste.
8. Intention, what I am driving at.
9. Obstacle.
10. Medicinal, curative.
11. Wish, desire as well as love
12. Accords
13. Secretly.
14. Ago.
15. Any moment whatsoever.
16. make an appointment with her.
17. Mix.
18. Worth, value.
19. Loose corrupt woman.
20. Give, adduce.
21. Mislead , deceive.
22. Harass, afflict.
23. Do you want?

Hero. I shall do everything consistent with modesty to get my cousin a suitable husband.

D. Pedro. And Benedick is not the worst husband I know of. I can at least say this much of him that he is of good descent, tried courage and unquestioned honesty. I will tell you, lady, how to work upon Beatrice's feelings so that she will fall in love with Benedick: and if you three will help me, I will trick Benedick, his native sharpness and fastidious tasters notwithstanding, into falling in love with Beatrice. If we succeed, Cupid, the god of love, will be shorn of his glory as a smiter of human heart. Come with me and I shall tell you of my plan.

Scene II. *The same.*

Enter **Don John** *and* **Borachio.**

Don John. It is now quite decided that Count Claudio shall marry Leonato's daughter.

Bora. Yes, it is so; but I am against this arrangement.

D. John. Any difficulty, any obstacle; any hindrance in his way will act as medicine to me ; I am ill with hatred towards him, and whatever crosses his wishes is agreeable to me. How can you put of his marrage ?

Bora. It cannot be done without some trick; but by suoh a secret trick that no one shall suspect me.

D. John. Tell me in a few words how you propose to do it.

Bora. You remember I told you about a year ago how much Margaret, Hero's lady-in-waiting, loves me.

D. John. Yes, what is it ?

Bora. It is in my power to arrange with her that she will look out at Hero's bedroom at late hours of the night.

D. John. How can a scheme like that prevent the wedding ?

Bora. It is up to you to utilise this incident so as to bring some evil out of it. You must tell Don Pedro that he will tarnish his honour by helping to bring about a marriage between a loose woman like Hero and a famous soldier like Claudio, whom you praise so highly before your brother.

D. John. How can I prove such a charge ?

Bora. You can give them proofs which will mislead Don Pedro, distress Claudio, ruin Hero and be the death of Leonato, What more do you expect ?

D. John. Only to *dispite*[1] them, I will endeavour any thing.

Bora. Go, then ; find me a meet hour to draw Don Pedro and the Count Claudio alone : tell them that you know that Hero loves me ; *intend*[2] a kind of zeal both to the prince and Claudio, as,—in love of your brother's honour, who hath made this match, and his friend's re-utation, who is this like to be *cozened*[3] with the semblance of a maid,—that you have discovered thus. They will scarcely believe this without *trial*[4] : offer them *instances,*[5] which shall bear no less likelihood than to see me at her chamber-window, hear me call Margaret Hero, hear Margaret term me Claudio ; and bring them to see this the very night before the intended wedding,—for in the meantime I will so fashion the matter that Hero shall be absent,—and there shall appear such seeming truth of Hero's *disloyalty*[6] that jealousy shall be called *assurance*[7] and all the preparation overthrown. 43

D. John. Grow this[8] to what adverse issue it can, I will put it in practice. Be cunning in the working this, and thy fee is a thousand ducats.

Bora. Be you *constant*[9] in the accusation, and my cunning shall not shame me.

D. John. I will *presently*[10] go learn their day of marriage. [*Exeunt*

1. Splite.
2. Pretend.
3. Cheated.
4. Proof.
5. Facts, proofs.
6. Infid e-lity in lov. e
7. Cer-tainty.
8. Let this grow.
9. Consis-tent.
10. Imme-diately, at once.

Scene III. Leonato's *orchared*

Enter **Benedick**

Bene. Boy !

Enter **Boy.**

Boy. Signior ?

Bene. In my *Chamber-window*[11] lies a book : bring it hither to me in the *orchard.*[12]

Boy. I am here already, sir.

Bene. I know that ; but I would have thee hence, and here again. [*Exist Boy*] I do much wonder that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his *behaviours*[13] to love, will, after he hath laguhed at such shallow follies in others, become the *argument*[14] of his own scorn by falling in love : and such a man is Claudio. I have known when there

11. Windon ledge of his bed-room.
12. Garden.
13. Manners, actions etc.
14. Subject.

D. John. I will do anything to splite them.

Bora. Very well then, find an appropriate time to meet Claudio and Don Pedro in private and inform them that Hero is in love with me, pretend to be very anxious about their honour, for Don Pedro; being responsible for this marriage will be disgraced by it and Claudio, his friend, being deceived by the mere appearance of chastity in Hero will be dishonoured by the marriage. Say that it is only for this reason that you have revealed your knowledge of the truth. They will not accept your statements without proofs : produce circumstantial evidence which shall have all the appearance of truth in as much as they shall see me at her bed-room window, hear me address Margaret as Hero and hear Margaret address me as Borachio (or Claudio) ; get them to see all this definitely the night before the marriage. Meanwhile I shall so manage things that Hero shall be away from her room that night. To the eye-witnesses these evidence will look such a clear proof of Hero's infidelity that suspicion shall seem certainty and all the arrangements for the marriage shall be upset.

D. John, I will carry out this plot, however, serious may by the consequences of it to me. If you can skilfully do it, you will be paid thousand ducats.

Bora. If you will only keep accusing Hero consistently and boldly, I shall have no reason to be ashamed of my skill.

D. John. I shall go at once and fiind out the date of the wedding. [*Exeunt*].

Scene III. Leonato's Orchard.

Enter **Borachio.**

Bene. Boy !

Enter **Boy.**

Boy. Yes, Sir ?

Bene. I left a volume in the recess of my bedroom—window ; bring it here to me in the garden.

Boy. You may consider it brought already, Sir. I am already before you.

Bene. Yes, you are. But I want that you should go from here and then come back here (taken him literally) [Exit Boy.] It is a matter for surprise that a man, who has seen and ridiculed the follies and absurdities of people in love, should lay himself open to the same scorn and ridicule by falling in love himself : Claudio's case is in point. There was a time when martial thoughts occupied his whole

was no music with him but the drum and the fife ; and now had he rather hear the *tabor*[1] and the *pipe*[2]. I have known when he would have walked ten mile-a-foot to see a good *armour* ;[3] and now will he lie ten nights awake, *carving the fashion*[4] of a new doublet. He was *wont*[5] to speak plain and to the purpose, like an honest man and soldier ; and now is he turned orthography ; his words are a very fantastical banquet, just so many strange dishes. May I be so *converted*[6] and see with these eyes ? I cannot tell ; I think not : I will not be sworn but love may transform me to an oyster ; but I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an *oyster*[7] of me, he shall never make me such a fool. One woman is *fair*,[8] yet I am *well*[9]; another is wise, yet I am well ; another virtuous yet I am well ; but till all graces be in one woman one woman shall not come in my *grace*.[10] Rich she shall be, that's certain; wise, or I'll *none*[11] ; virtuous: or I'll never *cheapen*[12] her ; fair, or I'll never look on her ; mild, or come not near me ; *noble or not I for an angel*[13] ; of good discourse, an excellent musician. and her hair shall be of what colour it please God. Ha ! the prince and *Monsieur Love*[14] *!* I will hide me in the *arbour*[15]. [*Withdraws*]

Enter **Don Pedro, Claudio and Leonato**.

D. Pedro. Come, shall we hear this music ?

Claud. Yea, my good lord. How still the evening is,
As hush'd on purpose to grace harmony !

D. Pedro. See you where Benedick hath hid himself ?

Claud. O, very well, my lord : the music ended,
We'll *fit the kid-fox*[16] *with a pennyworth*.[17]

Enter **Balthasar** *with Music*.

D. Pedro. Come, Balthasar, we'll hear that song again.

Balth. O, good my lord, *tax*[18] not so bad a voice
To *slander* music any more than once.

D. Pedro. It is the *witness*[19] *still*[20] of excellency.

1. Tambourine, a small drum.
2. A Kind of whistle (pastoral music.)
3. Suit of armour.
4. Designing or planning the shape and style.
5. Accustomed.
6. Changed.
7. Anything fish or flesh (animal).
8. Pretty.
9. Heart-whole.
10. Favour.
11. i.e., have none of her, have nothing to do with her.
12. Make a bid for' offer a price for.
13. A familiar pun on two coins worth 6s.8d. and 10s. respectively.
14. i.e., Claudio.
15. Bower, summer-house.
16. (4) Fox-cub or young fox (2) Discovered for (3) 'Hid fox.'
17. Something trifling.
18. Strain, task.
19. Bring discredit or disgrace upon.
20.Evidence-proof.
20. Always.

mind; but now thoughts of love please him more. Once a suit of armour (and for that matter all military equipments) used to be of more interest to him than a smart and stylish jacket and for that matter all articles of dress. While previously his speech was simple and direct like a true soldier's, this language has now become scholarly dictionary-like—a strange collection, of fanciful words. I wonder if I shouid ever happen to behave thus ! one never knows; but it seems very unlikely ; I cannot take an oath that I will never be changed by love into an oyster—any object, fish or animal ; but I am prepared to swear that nothing short of such a miraculous transformation will change me into a foolish lover. I am heart-whole inspite of acquaintance with the world's pretty, clever and good women; I will never love any one woman until I find one who in her single person combines all these rare gifts. The lady of my choice must have to be wealthy, sure enough ; wise or she will not be acceptable to me; good. or I will never offer a price or her; pretty, or I will never so much as look at her; gentle, or I will keep her at arm's length. If she is not well-born, I will not give an angel (10 shillings) for her : she must be a smart talker and a skilful musician besides; as to her hair, I do not care what colour it is. I must conceal myself in the summer-house, for here come the Prince and Mr. Lover.

[*Withdraws.*

Enter **Don Pedro, Claudio** *and* **Leonato.**

D. Pedro. Will you come with me and listen to this music ?

Claud. Gladly, your Highness. The evening is calm and peaceful, as though all sounds were silenced to lend additional sweetness to the music !

D. Pedro. Do you not see where Benedick has gone into hiding ?

Claud. Yes, I see him clearly : when the music is finished, we shall give the fox-cub money's worth i.e., play upon him the pretty trick we have devised.

Enter **Balthasar** *with* **Music.**

D. Pedro. Do please give us that song once more, Balthasar.

Balth. My dear Prince, do not put such a strain on my poor unmusical voice as to order me to disgrace that song once again.

D. Pedro. It is always the evidence of genuine worth to

To put a strange face[1] *on his*[2] own perfection.
I pray thee, sing, and let me *woo*[3] no more.

Balth. Because you talk of wooing, I will sing;
Since many a wooer doth commence his suit.
To her he thinks not worthy, yet he wooes,
Yet will he swear he loves.

D. Pedro. Now' pray thee. come;
Or, if thou wilt hold longer argument,
Do it in notes.

Balth. Note this before my *notes*;[4]
There's not a note of mine that's worth the noting.

D. Pedro. Why, these are very crotchets that he speaks;
Note, notes, forsooth, and nothing. [*Air*

Bene. Now, 'divine air' ! now is his soul *ravished*![5] Is it not strange that *sheeps' guts*[6] should *hale*[7] souls out of men's bodies? Well, a horn for my money, when all's done.

The Song

Balth. Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever.
One foot in sea and one on shore,
To one thing constant never :
Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you *blythe*[8] and bonny,
Convertiny[9] all your sounds of woe
Into Hey nonny, nonny.
Sing no more *ditties*[10], sign no *moe*,[11]
Of *dumps*[12] so dull and heavy ;
The fraud of men was ever so,
Since summer first was *leavy*[13]
Then sign not so, etc.

D. Pedro. By my troth, a good song.

Balth. And an ill singer, my lord.

D. Pedro. Ha, no, no, faith; thou singest well enough for a *shift*.[14]

Bene. An he had been a dog that should have howled thus, they would have hanged him ; and I pray God his bad voice *bode*[15] no mischief. I had as *lief*[16] have heard the *night-raven*[17], come what plague could have come after it.

D. Pedro. Yea, marry, dost thou hear, Balthasar ? I pray thee, get us some excellent music ; for tomorrow night we would have it at the Lady Hero's chamber-window.

1. Pretend to be unconscious of.
2. Its.
3. Solicit.
4. Music.
5. Delighted, transported.
6. Catgut or strings of stringed instruments.
7. Draw
8. Merry.
9. Changing-
10. Songs.
11. More.
12. (1) Doleful strains, melancholy strains (2) Low spirits.
13. Leafy.
14. Change, make shift.
15. Portended.
16. Soon, gladly.
17. (1)Night-heron (2) owl-bird of ill omen.

depreciate its own quality. Sing again, please, and do not make me request you against.

Balth. All right, since you talk of being a suitor. I will sing that song again; you are like suitors who frequently woo ladies without thinking any more of their worth than you do of my voice and who nevertheless swear that they love them as you do my voice.

D. Pedro. Come, let us have the song: or if you wish to discourse any further, do so in the form of music.

Balth. Before proceeding to hear my music, please mark that there is not a single note in my music that is worth noticing or observing.

D. Pedro. Look here ; the fellow is speaking in terms of music and quibbling merely on the word 'notes'. [*Air.*

Bene. O, heavenly music which has delighted and encaptured his soul ! Is it not almost a miracle that the catgut of stringed instruments should transport men's souls out of their bodies as it were ? As for me, everytime I prefer a horn.

The Song

Balth. Don't grieve, fair ladies, for the whole male sex are given to deception. They are never faithful in love, and their roaming life on sea and land is typical of their fickle nature. So instead of pining and languishing for them, gladly let them depart. Shedding off all sorrow, be merry and beautiful and change all your sad strains into the burden of a gay song *i.e.*, into the merry notes of happiness. No longer sing sad songs and doleful tunes or grieve for the fickleness of men, for men have been always like this since the trees first put on leaf in summer.

D. Pedro. Truly, a capital song.

Balth. But not a capital singer, your Highness.

D. Pedro. Oh ! you are just good enough, at leas better than nothing.

Bene. A dog would have been killed for making such a noise as this singer. I hope his unmusical voice portends no bad luck to us. I would sooner listen to the ill-omen horse cry of the night-crow (night-heron), follow whatever disaster may on it.

D. Pedro. Yes, indeed, Balthasar ; do you get me ? Please find some good musicians for us, for to-morrow we desire to serenade the Lady Hero.

Balth. The best I can, my lord.

D. Pedro. Do so : farewell. [*Exit Balthasar*] Come hither, Leonato. What was it you told me of to-day, that your niece Beatric was in love with Signior Benedick ?

Claud. O, ay : *stalk*[1] on, stalk on ; the fowl sits. I did never think that lady would have loved any man.

Leon. No, nor I neither ; but most wonderful that she should so *dote on*[2] Signior Benedick, whom she hath in all outward *behaviours*[3] seemed over to abhor.

Bene. Is't possible ? Sits the wind in that corner?

Leon. By my *troth*,[4] my lord, I cannot tell what to think of it but that she loves him with an *enraged*[5] affection ; it is past the *infinite* of *thought*.[6]

D. Pedro. May be she doth but *counterfeit*.[7]

Claud. Faith, like enough.

Leon. O God, counterfeit ! There was never counterfeit of passion came so near the *life*[8] of passion as she *discovers*[9] it.

D. Pedro. Why what effects of passion shows she ?

Claud. Bait the hook well ; this *fish*[10] will bite.

Leon. What effects, my lord ? She will sit you, you heard my daughter tell you how.

Claud. She did, indeed.

D. Pedro. How, how, I pray you ? You amaze me ; I would have thought her spirit had been *invincible*[11] against all assaults of affection.

Leon. I would have sworn it had, my lord; especially against Benedick.

Bene. I should think this a *gull*,[12] but that the white bearded fellow speaks it ; knavery cannot, sure, hide himself in such *reverence*.[13]

Claud. He hath ta'en the *infection* ;[14] *hold it up*.[15]

D. Pedro. Hath she made her affection known to Benedick?

Leon. No; and swears she never wi!l : that's her *torment*[16]

Claud. 'Tis true, indeed; so your daughter says: 'I shall' says she, 'that have so oft *encountered*[17] him with scorn, write to him that I love him ?'

1. Approach the game stealthily.
2. Fondly love.
3. Manners.
4. Honour
5. Mad passion.
6. Beyond all conception, beyond the limitless power of thought.
7. Feign.
8. Reality.
9. Reveals, shows.
10. i.e., Benedick.
11. Proof, unconquerable.
12. Trick.
13. Venerable appear ance.
14. Bait.
15. Keep it up, keep the joke going.
16. Cause of suffering.
17. Met.

Balth. I will get the best musicians I can, sir.

D. Pedro. Do please. Good-bye. [Exit Balthasar]. Leonato, should I take it for granted that Beatrice had fallen in love with Benedick ?

Claud. O, yes ; fowler-like follow the game under the cover of the stalking-horse *i.e.*, pursue you conversation on the subject, for Benedick is listening. I have never dreamt that Beatrice was capable of loving any man.

Leon. Nor did I. That she should be infatuated with love of the very man whom. she has always hated, gives me the surprise of my life.

Bene. Can this be true ? Is that now things stand ?

Leon, In truth. prince, I do not know what to make of it except that she loves him with a mad passion, beyond even the limitless of thought to conceive.

D. Pedro. Perhaps she is only shamming.

Claud. That is quite likely.

Leon. Good heavens ! then never before did pretence of love make such a close approach to the reality of it as shown by her.

D. Pedro. What signs of love does she show.

Claud. Make your description of the symptoms of love flattering to Benedick's vanity, he will believe every word of it.

Leon. What signs, my lord ? Hero has told us how she sits brooding all the time.

Claud. Yes, that's right.

D. Pedro. Please let me know all about it. I am astonished ; I have always supposed that she was proof against passion.

Leon. I would have said that of her on oath, particularly where Benedick was concerned, your Highness.

Bene. If it were not for the fact that the speaker is an old venerable person, I should imagaine this to be a trick ; such reverent looks cannot be a mask for villainy.

Claud. Keep it up : he has caught it !

D. Pedro. Has she declared her mind to Benedick ?

Leon. She vows she will never do it : that makes her suffer so much silently.

Claud. Right you are. Beatrice is reported by Hero to have said that decency forbids her to communicate her mind to one whom she has always scorned.

Leon. This says she now when she is beginning to write to him; for she'll be up twenty times a night, and there will she sit in her *smock*[1] till she have writ a sheet of paper; my daughter tells us all.

Claud. Now you talk of a sheet of paper, I remember a pretty jest your daughter told us of.

Leon. O, when she had writ it and was reading it over, she found Benedick and Beatrice *between*[2] the sheet.

Claud. *That.*[3]

Leon. O, she tore the letter into a thousand halfpence; railed at herself, that she should be so immodest to write to one that she knew would *flout*[4] her; 'I measure him,' says she, by my own spirit: for I should flout him, if he writ to me; yea, though I love him, I should.'

Claud. Then down upon her knees she falls, weeps sobs, beats her heart, tears her hair, prays, curses, 'O: sweet Benedick! God give me patience!'

Leon. She doth indeed; my daughter say so: and the *ecstacy*[5] hath so much *overborne*[6] her that my daughter is sometime *afeard*[7] she will do a desperate outrage to herself: it is very true.

D. Pedro. It were good that Benedick knew of it by some other, if she will not discover it.

Claud. To what end? He would make but a sport of it and torment the poor lady worse.

D. Pedro. An he should, it were an *alms*[8] to hang him. She's an excellent sweet lady; and, *out of*[9] all suspicion, she is virtuous.

Claud. And she is exceeding wise,

D. Pedro. In everying but in loving Benedick.

Leon. O, my Lord, wisdom and *blood*[10] combating in so tender a body, we have ten proofs to one that blood hath the victory, I am sorry for her, as I have just cause, being uncle and her guardian.

D. Pedro. I would she had bestowed this *dotage*[11] on me; I would have *daffed*[12] all other *respects*[13] and made her half myself. I pray you, tell Benedick of it, and hear what a' will say.

1. Under-garment, here night-dress.
2. All over.
3. That was it, nothing less.
4. Mock.
5. Madness, frenzy.
6. Over-powered.
7. Afraid.
8. An act of charity, a good deed.
9. Beyond.
10. Passion.
11. Extreme fondness, foolish love.
12. Put aside
13. Consi-deractions.

Leon. She speaks thus although she writes love-letters to him often ; she gets up many times during night and in her night-dress sits up till she has covered a whole sheet of paper with writing. Hero has told me all about it.

Claud. I am reminded of a good joke, Hero told us about this.

Leon. Oh ! I know ; when she had finished writing her letter and was reading it she found 'Beatrice and Benedick' all over the sheet. Isn't that the joke ?

Claud. Yes, that is the one.

Leon. She tore the letter into small pieces and reproached herself for having written a love-letter to one who would certainly mock at her ; she judges him by her own attitude and says that though she loved him yet she would scoff at him if he were to write her a similar letter.

Claud. Then she goes down on her knees, gives vent to the most violent grief, behaves like mad person, call sweetly on her absent lover and prays to God to give her endurance.

Leon. All this is true ; Hero says so : she is so beside herself with her mad passion that my daughter fears she may commit suicide.

D. Pedro. It is necessary that somebody should tell Benedick about it, since she will not reveal it herself.

Claud. What good will that do ? He would only torture the poor lady by making fun of her.

D. Pedro. If he were to do this, it would be a meritorious act to kill him. Beatrice is a very good girl and doubtless virtuous.

Claud. And she is very wise too.

D. Pedro. Yes, in everything except in her love for Benedick.

Leon. Should there be a conflict between reason and passion in a delicate woman, the chances are that the blood will triumph. She being my niece and ward, I am really sorry for her as it is but natural.

D. Pedro. I wish she had given her tender love to me : I would have set aside all other considerations and made her my wife. Please inform Benedick about it and let us see what he thinks of it.

Leon. Were it good, think you ?

Claud. Hero thinks surely she will die ; for she says she will die, if he love her not, and she will die, ere she make her love known, and she will die, if he woo her, rather than she will *bate*[1] one breath of her accustomed *crossness*.[2] 159

D. Pedro. She doth well : if she should make *tender*[3] of her love, 'tis very possible he'll scorn it : for the man, as you know all, hath a *contemptible*[4] spirit.

Claud. He is a very *proper*[5] man.

D. Pedro. He hath indeed in good *outward happiness*.[6]

Claud. Before God ! and, in my mind, very wise,

D. Pedro, He doth indeed show some sparks that are like *wit*.[7]

Claud. And I take him to be valiant.

D. Pedro. As Hector, I assure you ; and in the managing of quarrels you may *say*[8] he is wise ; for either he avoids them with great discretion, or undertakes them with a most Christian-like fear. 172

Leon: If he do fear God, a' must necessarily keep peace : if he break the peace, he ought to enter into a quarrel with fear and trembling.

D. *Pedro.* And so will he do ; for the man doth fear God, *howsoever*[9] it seems not in him by some *large*[10] jests he will make. Well, I am sorry for your niece. Shall we go seek Benedick, and tell him of her love ?

Claud. Never tell him, my lord : let her wear it out with good *counsel*.[11]

Leon. Nay, that's impossible : she may wear her heart out first.

D. *Pedro.* Well, we will hear further of it *by*[12] your daughter : let it *cool*[13] the while. I love Benedick well ; and I could wish he would modestly examine himself, to see how much he is unworthy so good a lady.

Leon. My lord, will you walk ? dinner is ready.

Claud. If he do not dote on her upon this, I will vneer trust my expectation. 190

1. Abate.
2. Perverse ness.
3. Voluntary offer.
4. Contemptuous, scornful.
5. good physique.
6. A pleasing appear ance.
7. Wisdom.
8. "See", according to folios.
9. Although.
10. Broad, coarse.
11. Reflection.
12. From.
13. Rest.

Leon. Do you think it is good to do so ?

Claud. My wife fears that this luckless passion will be the death of Beatrice. She will die of a broken heart if her love is not returned but at the same time will never declare her passion to Benedick, preferring death to such a declaration. Nor would she leave off one jot or tittle of herperverse opposition to his suit if he were to woo her.

D. Pedro. She has done the right thing. The man is a scoffea, you know, and so it is very likely that if she were to offer him her love on her own account, he would scornfully reject it.

Claub. He is a man of good physique.

D. Pedro. Yes, he has an attrective appearance.

Claud. He is indeed ; and in my opinion wise too.

D. Pedro. Yes, some times he does show some flashes of wisdom.

Claud. In my opinion he is brave also.

D. Pedro. As brave as Hector the famous Trojan wrrior (while running away Achilles) and yet the way he manages quarrels shows that he is prudent either he avoids fights or when forced into them he engages in them with much fear and hesitation as becomes a true Christian.

Leon. As a God-fearing Christian he should shrink from fights or engage in them with great fear and timidity.

D. Pedro. So he will, for Benedick is pious enough, however it might appear to the contrary, judging by the broad humour he indulges in. I pity Beartrice. Should we not inform Benedick about her love for him ?

Claud. By no means, your lordship ; s; let her conquer this passion with her better judgment.

Leon. No, that is out of the question. She would sooner lose her life than her love.

D. Pedro. We shall hear more about it from Hero : let the matter rest for a time in the meanwhile. Personally I like Benedick immensely, and I would have him estimate his own worth soberly and realise how much better she is than himself.

Leon. Dinner is ready, my lord. Shall we move ?

Claud. If Benedick does not desperately fall in love, with Benedick after this, I shall never expect anything in future.

D. Pedro. Let there be the same net spread for her; and that must your daughter and her gentlewoman *carry.*[1] The sport will be, when they hold one an opinion of another's *dotage*,[2] and no such matter: that's the scene that I would see, which will be merely a *dumb show.*[3] Let us send her to call him in to dinner.

[*Exeunt Don Pedro, Claudio, and Leonato,*

Bene, [*Coming forward*] This can be no trick; the conference was *sadly borne.*[4] They have the truth of this from Hero. They seem to pity the lady: it seems her affections *have their full bent.*[5] Love me! why, is must be *requited.*[6] I hear how I am *censured*:[7] they say I will bear myself proudly, if I perceive the love come from her; they say too that she will rather die than give any sign of affection. I did never think to marry; I must not seem proud: hapy are they that hear their detractions and can put them to mending. They say the lady is fair; 'tis a truth, I can bear them witness; and virtuous; 'tis so, I cannot *reprove*[8] it; and wise, but for loving me; by my troth, it is no addition to her wit, nor no great *argument of*[9] her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her. I may chance have some odd *quirks*[10] and *remnants*[11] of wit broken on me, because I have *railed*[12] so long against marriage; but doth not the appetite alter? a man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure in his age. Shall *quips*[13] and *sentences*[14] and these *paper bullets*[5] of the brain awe a man from the *creer*[16] of his humour? No, the world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married. Here comes Beatrice. By this lady! she's a fair lady: I do spy some marks of love in her.

Enter **Beatrice**

Beat. Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

Bene. Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

Beat. I took no more pains for those thanks than you take pains to thank me; if it had been painful, I would not have come.

Bene. You take pleasure then in the message?

1. Carry out manage.
2. Fond love.
3. Pantomime, as both will be tongue-tied
4. Seriously conducted.
5. Are at the utmost stretch, strained to the utmost.
6. Returned.
7. Judged,
8. Disprove, deny.
9. Reason for.
10. Jests. quaint scraps of sarcasm.
11. Fragments.
12. Jested.
13. Sarcastic sentences.
14. Maxims. pithy sayings.
15. Shafts to wit.
16. Course.

D. Pedro. Let the same trap be laid for Beatrice; and that must be managed by Hero and her lady-in-waiting between them. The fun will be when they come to believe in their mutnal fondness, when nothing of the sort exists. I should like to witness this silent pantomime of two lovers tongue-tied with shyness. Let us send Beatrice to ask Benedick to dinner.

[Exeunt Don Pedro-Claudio, and Leonato.

Bene. (Soliloquy) (coming forward). There is no deception about it ; they were talking quite seriously. They have been told about it by Hero. They felt very sorry for Beatrice : it appears her feelings are stretched to the utmost. Her love must be responed. I have heard them blame me for being too proud not to reject the love if offered to me; I have heard them also saying that she will prefer death to a declaration of love. Marriage was the secondary thing I thought of but I must not be proud of it. Those men are lucky who can hear what is said in disparagement of them and in the light thereof can rcorrect themselves. They have futher said that the girl is poetty : that is true. She is virtuous, there is not denying it; and wise too except in the matter of falling in love with me; by my honour, her love for me does not enhance her reputation for wisdom, but neither is it a proof of her foolishness, for I am going to love her tremendously in return. Some people may perhaps make me the target of quaint jests and old quotations of witty utterances because I have always spoken against married life; but surely a man's tastes may change with the passing of time. A man may not stand in his old age the food that he loved in his youth. Jokes and maxims and shafts of ridicule are inoffensive as bullets made of paper cannot frighten a man out of his own inclinations. The race must continue. When I advocated the cause of celibacy. I never thought that I would like to marry one day. But see here is the lady herself. She is surely a lovely lady and it seems she already regards me with some feelings of love.

Enter **Beatrice.**

Beat. Most reluctantly do I come to announce to you that the dinner is ready.

Bene. Gentle lady, I am grateful to you for the trouble you have taken.

Beat. These thanks meant less trouble to me than the return of them to you. Do not suppose I would have come if it had meant any trouble.

Bene. Then you were delighted to come, Ah?

Beat. Yea, just so much as you may take upon a knife's point and choke a *daw*[1] withal. You have no *stomach*,[2] signior ; fare you well. [*Exit*,

Bene. Ha ! 'Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner :' there's a double meaning in that, 'I took no more pains for those thanks than you took pains to thank me ;' that's as much as to say. Any pains that I take for you is as easy as thanks. If I do not take pity of her, I am a villain ; if I do not love her, I am a Jew. I go will get her *picture*.[3] [*Exit*.

Act III

Scene I. Leonato's *Garden*.

Enter **Hero, Margaret,** *and* **Ursula**.

Hero. Good Margaret, run thee to the parlour;
There shalt thou find my cousin Beatrice
proposing[4] with the prince and Claudio :
Whisper her ear and tell her, I and Ursula
Walk in the *orchard*[5] and our whole discourse
Is all of her ; say that thou overheard'st us ;
And bid her steal into the *pleached*[6] bower.
Where honeysuckles, ripen'd by the sun.
Forbid the sun to enter, like favourites.
Made proud by princes, that advance their pride
Against that power that bred it ; there will she hide her.
To listen our *purpose*[7]. This is thy *office*[8]
Bear thee well in it and leave us alone.

Marg. I'll make her come, I warrant you,
presently. [*Exit*

Hero. Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come,
As we do *trace*[9] this alley up and down.
Our talk must only be of Benedick.
When I do name him, let it be thy part.
To praise him more than ever man did merit :
May talk to thee must be how Benedick
Is *sick in love with*[10] Beatrice. Of this matter.
Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made,
That only wounds by hearsay.

1. Jackdaw.
2. Appetite.
3. Portrait.
4. Conversing, talking
5. Garden.
6. Interwoven.
7. Talk.
8. Task.
9. Walk.
10. Dying of love for.

Beat. Yes. I got as much delight (*i.e.* none) as one gets out of killing a jackdaw with a knife. But I see you have no appetite; good-bye. [*Exit.*

Bene. Ah, let me think over the words she spoke. 'Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner'; there is an underlying meaning in them. (I was sent against my will, because I wished to come of own accord). Then she indirectly said that the trouble she took for me was a pleasure, as pleasant as thanks. I am a rogue if I do not pity the lady. I am mean and contemptible if I do not love her. In the meantime I will get a portrait of Beatrice. [*Exit.*

ACT III

Scene I. Leonato's *orchard.*

Enter **Hero, Margaret,** *and* **Ursula.**

Hero. Hasten, gentle Margaret, to the drawing-room where you will see Beatrice conversing with Don Pedro and Claudio. Inform her secretly that you overheard Ursula and myself talking in the garden and she was the subject of our talk. Ask her to go noiselessly into the thickly interwoven arbour where the honey-suckles matured into beauty and fragrance by the sun shut out that very sunshine like royal favourites rendered arrogant and powerful through the King's patronage turning against their royal benefactor Tell her that she can overhear our conversation if she conceals herself there. That is the part you have to play ; manage it cleverly leave us alone.

Marg. I shall persuade her to come at once, I assure you. [*Exit*

Hero. Well Ursula, as soon Beatrice comes here, we shall talk about Benedick alone as we walk up and down this avenue. At the mention of Benedick's name, make it your business to praise him more than man ever deserved while I will go on telling you how Benedick is madly in love with her. Of such stuff is the little love-god's dart made which wound human hearts only by what people say and report *i.e.* that is the way to make people fall in love with each other; love is inspired by what people hear from others.

Enter **Beatrice,** *behind.*

Now being ;
For look where Beatrice, like a lapwing, runs
Close by the ground, to hear our conference.

Urs. The pleasant'st angling is to see the fish
Cut with her *golden oars*[1] the silver stream,
And greedily devour the treacherous bait :
So angle we for Beatrice ; who even now
Is couched in the *woodbine*[2] *coverture*[3].
Fear you not my part of the dialogue.

Hero. Then go we near her, that her ear
lose nothing
Of the false sweet bait that we lay for it.
[*Approaching the bower*
No, truly, Ursula, she is too disdainful ;
I know her spirits are as *coy*[4] and wild
As *haggards of the rock*[5].

Urs. But are you sure
That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely ?

Hero. So says the prince and my new-trothed lord.

Urs. And did they bid you tell her of it, madam ?

Hero. They did entreat me to acquaint
her of it ;
But I persuaded them, if they loved Benedick,
To *wish*[6] him wrestle with affection,
And never to let Beatrice know of it.

Urs. Why did you so ? Doth not the gentleman
Deserve as full as fortunate a bed,
As ever Beatrice shall couch upon ?

Hero. O god of love ! I know he doth deserve
As much as may be yielded to a man :
But Nature never framed a woman's heart
Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice ;
Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,
Misprising[7] what they look on, and her wit
Values itself so highly that to her.
All matter else seems *weak*[8] : she cannot love,
Nor take no shape nor *project*[9] of affection,
She is so *self-endeared*[10].

1. Fins.
2. Honeysuckle.
3. Thicket copse.
4. Shy.
5. Wild, untrained hawks.
6. Advise, Bid.
7. Undervaluing, despising.
8. Worthless, of no impotance.
9. Idea, conception.
10. Self-loving, egotistic.

Enter **Beatrice** *behind.*

Lo ! there comes Beatrice running along the ground like the common plover or peewit to overhear our talk.

Urs. The sportsman gets the greatest fun out of his angling when the fish parts the crystalline waters with its shining fins as it rushes forward unsuspectingly to swallow the bait ; in the same way do we angle for Beatrice who, we can well see, has just taken up her position in the thickly intertwined honey-suckle bower. Depend upon me for playing may part well in the conversation.

Hero. Then let us go nearer to her so that she may not miss a single word of the sweet but treacherous conversation with which we are going to entrap her. [Approaching the bower]. No. Ursula, that is impossible, for Beatrice is much too proud ; she is as shy and untamable as wild hawks.

Urs. But is it a fact that Benedick is so deeply with love with Beatrice ?

Hero. Yes, that is what Don Pedro and Claudio to whom I have been recently engaged declare.

Urs. And did they ask you to inform Beatrice about it ?

Here. Yes, they did : but I begged them, for the sake of the love they bore to Benedick, to advise him to repress his passing without ever letting Beatrice have any inkling of it.

Urs. But why ? Does not Benedick deserve to have a wife as good and attractive as Beatrice ?

Hero, O Cupid ! yes, none deserves better ; but Beatrice by nature is prouder than any woman on earth. Her eyes always flash with pride and contempt, making her undervalue whatever she looks upon. and she thinks so highly of her own cleverness that everything else pales into insignificance by its side. She is too full of self-love to be able to love or conceive the idea of loving others.

Urs. *sure*[1], I think so :
And therefore certainly it were not good.
She knew his love, lest she make sport at it.
Hero. Why, you speak truth. I never yet saw man.
How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featured,
But she would *spell him backward*[2] : if fair-faced.
She'd swear the gentleman should be her sister :
If *black*,[3] why, Nature, drawing of an *antique*,[4]
Made a foul blot : if tall, a lance ill-headed :
If *low*,[5] an agate very vilely cut ;
If speaking, why, a *vane*,[6] blown with all winds ;
If silent, why. a block moved with none,
So turns she every man the wrong side out
And never gives to truth and virtue that
Which simpleness and merit *purchaseth*[7]
Urs. Sure, sure such *carping*[8] is commendable.
Hero. No, not to be so odd and *from*[9] all fashions
As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable :
But who dare tell her so ? should speak,
She would mock me into air : O, she would laugh me
Out of myself, *press me to death*[10] with wit.
Therefore let Benedick, like cover'd fire,
Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly :
It were a better death than die with mocks,
Which is as bad die with tickling.
Urs. Yet tell her of it ; hear what she will say.
Hero. No ; rather I will go to Benedick
And counsel him fight against his passion.
And, truly, I'll devise some *honest slanders*[11]
To stain my cousin with : one doth not know
How much an ill word may empoison liking.
Urs. O, do not do your cousin such a wrong.
She cannot be so much without true judgment—
Having so *swift*[12] and excellent a wit
As she is *prized*[13] to have—as to refuse
So rare a gentleman as Signior Benedick.
Hero. He is the *only man of Italy*, [14]
Always excepted my dear Claudio.

1. Surely.
2. Turn all his qualities into defects.
3. Dark, esp. dark-bearded.
4. Something grotesque, a buffoon.
5. Short.
6. Weather-cock.
7. Acquires by right, deserves.
8. Fault-finding.
9. Away from, contrary to.
10. An allusion to an old punishment.
11. Inoffensive, harmless lies.
13. Quick, ready.
12. Reputed, estimated.
14. One above all others.

Urs. I agree with you entirely : so I do not think it proper to let her know about his love, lest she should make fun of it.

Hero. Yes, you are right. There is no man, however noble, youthful and handsome, whose good qualities she will not make out to be defects as witches make good prayers evil by saying them backwards. If he is good-looking, she will say that he is effeminate and more fit to be her sister than her lover : if he is dark complexioned, especially dark-bearded, she will call him a clown and a clumsy fellow ; if tall, she will call him a lean long spear with an unproportionate head ; if short in stature, a badly carved tiny figure on the precious stone of finger ring ; if talkative, he is a weather cock always moveing and creaking ; if he speaks but seldom, he will be called a lifeless statue. Thus does she misconstrue every body's qualities and never gives to simple truth and virtue the credit which by right belong to them.

Urs. Certainly, such a fault-finding spirit is not at all praiseworthy.

Hero. No, it is certainly not nice of her to be so eccentric and so different from all others in her behaviour : but no one would take the risk of telling her so. If I were to make the attempt, she would kill me with ridicule, put me out of countenance with her mockery, reduce me to silence and then punish me for not speaking by her withering sarcasm. So Benedick has no help for it but to pine [and languish in secret with his hidden passion ; and after all, to die of secret love is better than to die of scorn which is as bad as being tickled to death.

Urs. All the same tell her about it and see how she will take it.

Hero. No, I must not do so ; I will advise Benedick instead to subdue his love and I shall invent some harmless lies which will cast a blot on Beatrice's reputation and easily kill Benedick's love.

Urs. Please don't do such great harm to the Lady Beatrice. Possessing as she does such a high and keen intelligence as she is esteemed to have, she cannot be so foolish as to reject such an excellent suitor as Benedick.

Hero. He is the finest man in all Italy, beside my lovely Claudio.

Urs. I pray you, be not angry with me, madam,
Speaking my fancy[1] : Signior Benedick,
For shape, for bearing, *argument*[2] and valour
Goes foremost in report through Italy.

Hero. Indeed, he hath an excellant good name.

Urs. His excellence did earn it, ere he had it.
When are you married, madam ?

Hero. Why, every day, tomorrow. Come, go in :
I'll show thee some *attires*[3] and have thy counsel
Which is the best to *furnish*[4] me tomorrow.

Urs. She's *limed*,[5] I warrant you : we have caught her, madam.

Hero. If it proves so, then loving goes by *haps*[6]
Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps.
[*Exeunt Hero and Ursula.*

1. Giving you my idea.
2. Reasoning power.
3. Dresses, clothes.
4. Equip, deck.
5. Caught as with bird-lime.
6. Accideut, chance.

Beat. [*Coming forward*]
What fire is in mine ears ? Can this be true ?
Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorn so much ?
Contempt, farewell ! and maiden pride, adieu !
No glory lives behind the bach of such.
And, Benedick, love on : I will requite thee,
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand :
If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee
To bind our loves up in a holy band :
For others say thou dost deserve, and I
Believe it better than reportingly. [*Exit.*

Scene II. *A room in* **Leonato's** *house.*

Enter **Don Pedro, Claudio, Benedick,**

And Leonato.

D. Pedro. I do but stay till your marriage be consummate, and then go I toward Arragon.

Claud. I'll bring you thither, my lord, if you'll vouchsafe me.

D. Pedro. Nay, that would be as great a *soil*[7] in the *new gloss*[8] of your marriage as to show a child his new coat and forbid him to wear it. I will only *be bold with Benedick*[9] for his company ; for, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, he is all mirth : he hath twice

7. Stain, blemish.
8. First freshness, untarnished lustre.
9. Only take the liberty of asking his company.

Urs. I hope you will not mind if I tell you frankly what I think about it : he is reputed to be the first man in the country in figure, in carriage, reasoning power and courage.

Hero. Really, he has a very good reputation.

Urs. His qualities deserve this reputation long before he came to enjoy it. When are you going to be married, good lady ?

Hero. Why, I shall be married any moment tomorrow, (once married, always married) for tomorrow is the wedding day: Come along, let us go into the house : you will inspect some of my dresses and give me your advice as to which will be the best to make me pretty as a bride tomorrow.

Urs. She is caught by the trick, I assure you.

Hero. If so, then love is by chance. Some fall in love themselves (*i.e.* shot by the arrow of the love-God), others are tricked into it. [Exeunt Hero and Ursula.

Beat. [Coming forward] Oh, my ears are burning with that I have heard about myself ! Is there any truth in it ? ? Am I thus censured by people for pride and arrogance ? Then I take leave of scorn and virgin pride. (1) Such qualities are never praised in their absence *i.e.* those who are scornful and proud are never spoken well of by others or (2) Pride and scorn are cheap qualities and are not the outward manifestation of any noble moral endowment. Go on loving me, Benedick, and I will return your love. I will tame my proud heart which is like a wild falcon and make it sit on my falconer's *i.e.* Benedick's hand *i.e.* my proud heart will be tamed by Benedick's love. If you love me truly, my love in return will prompt you to unite our loving hearts in the sacred bond of marriage. People say that you are worthy, and I believe it on surer evidence than hearsay, for my heart is already yours. [*Exit.*

Scene II *A room in* **Leonato's** *house*

Enter **Don Pedro, Claudio, Benedick,** *and* **Leonato**

D. Pedro. I shall stop here only till the celebration of your marriage, and then I will leave for Arragon.

Claud. If you grant me permission, I should like to escort you there.

D. Pedro. No, that is to stain the untarnished lustre of your new marriage, happiness and will be like a llowing a child to see the splendour of his new dress and then asking him not to put it on. I will take the liberty of asking Benedick alone to accompany me; he is mirthful every inch of him, and he has several

or thrice *cut Cupid's-bow-string*[1] and *the little hangman*[2] dare not shoot at him; he hath a heart as sound as a bell and his tougue is the *clapper*;[3] for what his heart thinks his tongue speaks.

Bene. Gallants, I am not as I have been.

Leon. So say I: *methinks*[4] you are sadder.

Claud. I hope he be in love.

D. Pedro. Hang him, truant! there's no true drop of blood in him, to be truly touched with love: if he be sad, he *wants*[5] money.

Bene. I have the toothache.

D. Pedro. Draw it.

Bene. Hang it!

Claud. You must hang it first, and draw it afterwards.

D. Pedro. What! sigh for the toothache?

Leon. Where is but a humour or a *worm*,[6]

Bene. Well, every one can master a grief but he that has it.

Claud. Yet say I, he is in love.

D. Pedro. There is no appearance of *fancy*[7] in him, unless it be a *fancy*[8] that he hath to *strange disguises*[9]; as, to be a Dutchman today, a Frenchman to-morrow, or in the shape of two countries at once, as a German from the waist downwards, all *slops*,[10] and a Spaniard from the hip upward, no doublet. Unless he have a fancy to *this foolery*,[11] as it appears he hath, he is *no fool for fancy*,[12] as you would have it appear he is.

Claud. If he be not in love with some woman, there is no believing *old signs*[13]; a' brushes his hat o'mornings, what should that *bode*?[14]

D. Pedro. Hath any man seen him at the barber's?

Claud. No, but the barber's man hath been seen with him, and *the old ornament of his cheek*[15] hath already stuffed tennis-balls.

Leon. Indeed, he looks younger than he did by the loss of a beard.

D. Pedro. Nay, a' rubs himself with civet: can you *smell him out*[16] by that?

Claud. That's as much as to say, the sweet youth's in love.

1. Disabled, baffled him.
2. Rogue, rascal i.e. cupid.
3. Striker.
4. It seems to me.
5. Needs, lacks.
6. At the root of the tooth causing toothache.
7. Love.
8. Whim.
9. satire.
10. Loose breeches, baggy trousers.
11. Fantastic fashion.
12. No fool on account of love.
13. Traditional marks.
14. Foretel.
15. Whiskers and beard.
16. Detect his condition.

times baffled the attacks of the love god and the little rascal is afraid to return to the change : his heart is sound like a sound bell and his tongue is like the bill-striker, speaking only what the heart feels.

Bene. Gentlemen. I am a different man now.

Leon. That is exactly what I think : it seems to me your look more serious.

Claud. I hope he is in love.

D. Pedro, No, the rogue, that he is ! He could never be in love with any one ; he is temperamentally too cold for that ; he looks serious only if he is in need of money.

Bene. My tooth is troubling me.

D. Perdo. Pull it out.

Bene, I should like not only to pull it out but to hang it also like traitors.

Claud. Then, according to the common practice, the hanging should come before drawing.

D. Pedro. But I must not suppose you are sighing on account of your toothache.

Leon. A toothache is caused either by the fluids of the body or worms at the root of the tooth.

Bene. It is easy for those who do not suffer to teach those who do how to bear the suffering.

Claud. I still maintain that he is in love with some lady.

D. Pedro. There is no sign of love in him except that he has developed a love for fantastic new-fangled fashions in dress, wearing clothes cut in Dutch fashion one day and in French an other, and sometime clothes cut in the mixed styles of several countries as, for exmple, the loose baggy trousers of the German and the long all-covering cloak of the Spaniard. Unless he is in lôve with this new hobby, he is not in love at all as you would have us believe.

Claud. If he is not in love with some lady, then let us never more trust the traditional symptoms by which a lover is to be recognised. What does it mean except that he is a lover when he pays so much attention to his personal appearance ?

D. Pedro. Does he go to the hairdresser's ?

Claud. No, the hairdresser goes to him. He has already shaved off his beard which has gone to fill tennis-balls.

Leon. Yes, that has given him a youthful look.

D. Pedro. He has taken to the use of the perfume obtained from the civet-cat. Can you not imagine his condition from that ?

Claud. Oh! then it proves that the dear fellow is in love.

D. Pedro. The greatest *note*[1] of it is his melancholy.

Claud. And when was he wont *to wash his face*[2] ?

D. Pedro. Yea, or to *paint himself*[3] ? for the which I hear what they say of him.

Claud. Nay, but his jesting spirit ; which is now crept into a lute-string and now governed by stops.

D. Pedro. Indeed that tells a *heavy tale*[4] for him ; *conclude*[5], conclude, he is in love.

Claud. Nay, but I know who loves him.

D. Pedro. That would I know too : I *warrant*,[6] one that knows him not.

Claud. Yes, and his *ill conditions*[7] ; and, in despite of all, dies for him.

D. Pedro. She shall be buried *with her face upwards*.[8]

Bene. Yet is this no charm for the toothache. Old signior, walk aside with me : I have studied eight or nine wise words to speak to you, which these *hobby-horses*[9] must not hear.

[*Exeunt Benedick and Leonato.*

D. Pedro. For my life, to ***break with him***[10] about Beatrice.

Claud. 'Tis even so, Hero and ***Margaret***[11] have by this played their parts with Beatrice ; and then *the two bears*[12] will not bite one another when they meet.

Enter **Don John**

D. John. My lord and brother, God save you.

D. Pedro. *Good den*[13] brother.

D. John. If your leisure served, I would speak with you.

D. Pedro. In private ?

D. John. If it please you : yet Count Claudio may hear ; for what I would speak of, concerns him.

D. Pedro. What's the matter ?

D. John. [*To Claudio*] Means your lordship to be married to-morrow ?

D. Pedro. You know he does.

D. John. I know not that when he knows what I know.

1. Mark, proof.
2. Use cosmetics, use colour.
3. Use rouge.
4. Strong proof.
5. The inference is.
6. Guarantee.
7. Bad qualities.
8. i.e.,in her love's arms.
9. Silly, frivolous people.
10. Open the subject in talk.
11. Ursula.
12. Beatrice and Benedick.
13. Good even.

D. Pedro. To surest sign of his being in love is his sadness.

Claud, Was he ever in the habit of washing his face so often and using cosmetics ?

D. Pedro. Or using rouge to improve his complexion? They are talking a lot about this latest habit of his.

Claud. His love of wit and banter has also completely gone : it is now transformed into the sadness of the lover's music, that of the lute, and is now kept in check and control.

D. Pedro. Yes, all this is strong evidence against him and we cannot resist the conclusion that he is in love.

Claud· Yes, that he is ; not that alone but I could tell you of someone who is in love with him.

D. Pedro. I should like to know who she is : it must be some one who does not know his real character, I gurrantee.

Claud. No, it is one who knows him and his weak points thoroughly well ; but for all that she is pining for him.

D. Pedro. She shall be buried in her lover's arms i,e., her pining shall end in her lover's arms .

Bene. But all this does not cure my toothache. Reverend Sir, kindly step aside with me, for I should like to have a short serious discussion with you which I do not want these silly frivolous fellows to hear. [Exeunt Benedick and Leonato.

D. Pedro. I am absolutely sure he is going to speak to Leonato about his love for Beatrice.

Claud. Exactly. Hero and Ursula ('Margaret' is a slip) have by this time played their trich on Beatrice ; so Benedick and Beatrice who have always fought like bears will not fight when they meet in future.

Enter Don John.

D. John. May you live under the protection of God, my liege !

D. Pedro. Good evening, brother.

D. John. I would have a talk with you, if you can spare any time for me.

D. Pedro, Do you wish to talk to me alone ?

D. John. Yes, please ; but Count Claudio may be present since my message affects him also.

D. Pedro. What is it ?

D. John. (To Claudio) Does your marriage come off tomorrow?

D. Pedro. Yes, that is what he intends,

D. John. I am by no means sure of that when I have conveyed the news to him.

Clauld. If there be any *impediment*,[1] I pray you *discover*[2] it.

D. John. You may think I love you not; let that appear hereafter, and *aim better at me*[3] by that I now will *manifest*[4]. For my brother, (I think, he *holds you well*,[5] and in dearness of heart hath holp to effect your ensuing marriage;—surely suit ill spent and labour ill bestowed.

D. Pedro. Why, what's the matter?

D. John. I came hither to tell you; and, *circumstances shortened*,[6] for she has been too long a talking of, the lady is *disloyal*.[7]

Claud. Who Hero?

D. John. Even she, Leonato's Hero, your Hero, every man's Hero.

Claud. Disloyal?

D. John. The word is too good to *paint out*[8] her wickedness; I could say she were worse, think you of a worse title, and I will fit her to it. Wonder not till further *warrant*[9]: go but with me to-night, you shall see her chamber-window entered, even the night before her wedding-day; if you love her then, to-morrow wed her; but it would better fit your honour to change your mind.

Claud. *May*[10] this be so?

D. Pedro. I will not think it.

D. John. If you dare not trust that you see, confess not that you know: if you will follow me, I will show you enough; and when you have seen more and heard more, proceed accordingly.

Claud. If I see anything to-night why I should not marry her to-morrow, in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her.

D. Pedro. And, as I wooed for thee to obtain her, I will join with thee to disgrace her.

D. John. I will *disparage*[11] her no farther till you are my witnesses, *bear it coldly*[12] but till midnight, and let the issue show itself.

D. Pedro. O day *untowardly*[13] turned!

Claud. O mischief strangely thwarting!

D. John. O plague right well *prevented*![14] So will you say when you have seen the sequel. [*Exeunt.*

1. Obstacle, hindrance.
2. Reveal, Disclose
3. Form a better estimate of me.
4. Make clear, tell you.
5. Loves you.
6. To cut the matter short.
7. False, faithless.
8. Describe fully.
9. Proof, assurance.
10. Can.
11. Accusse, denounce.
12. Keep cool about it.
13. Adversely ended.
14. Anticipated forestalled.

Claud. If you are aware of any difficulty in the way of the marriage, reveal it straightway please.

D. John. You look upon me as an enemy of yours, I suppose, form a truer estimate of me by what I shall presently tell you. As for my brother Don Pedro, he has the greatest love for you and it is purely out of his affection for you that he helped to arrange the approaching marriage ; but it is all a waste of labour.

D. Pedro. Why, what is the wrong ?

D. Jhon. That is what I have come here to tell you. To put it in a nutshell, for she has been already talked of too much the lady is unfaithful to you.

Claud. Are you talking of my betrothed Hero ?

D. John. The same ; Leonato's daughter, your betrothed. and every-body's beloved.

Claud. Is she not faithfuly ?

D. Jhon. That word is too mild to describe fully all her evil ways : she is much worse than that : bethink yourself of a much more wicked epithet, I will show that she deserves it. But do not believe this surprising news till I have given you more tangible proof. If you come with me tonight, you will see her receiving a lover in her bed-room even on the eve of her marriage. If your love for her persists even after that, then marry her by all means tomorrow; but it will be more in keeping with your honour to give up your intention.

Claud. Is the thing possible ?

D. Pedro. I, for one, will never believe it.

D. John. If you cannot trust the testimony of your senses, do not mention what you have seen. If you accompany me, you will see enough to convince yourself. Then after you have seen and heard all about it, do as you please.

Claud. If, what you say, proves true tonight, I will not marry her tomorrow. I will disgrace her before the whole gathering in the very church where I should have otherwise married her.

D. Pedro. As I courted and won her for you, I will join hands with you in exposing her.

D. John. I shall vilify her no more just now till you see things for yourselves. Keep cool and collected till the middle of the night and then come to a decision in accordance with events.

D. Pedro. O, what a sad final to a day which began so well !

Claud. Oh, what an unwarranted obstacle in the way of my desires !

D. John. O, what a lucky save ! you will be of the same mind when you see things turning out as I say. [*Exeunt*

Scene III. *A street.*

Enter **Dogberry** *and* **Verges** *with the Watch*

Dog. Are you good men and true ?

Verg. Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer *salvation body and soul*.[1]

Dog. Nay that were a punishment too good for them, if they should have any *allegiance*[2] in them, being chosen for the prince's watch.

Verg. Well, give them their *charge*,[3] neighbour Dogberry.

Dog. First, who think you the most *desartless*[4] man to be constable ?

First Watch. Hugh Oatcake, sir, or George Seacole ; for they can write and read.

Dog. Come hither neighbour Seacole. God hath blessed you with a good name to be a *well-favoured*[5] man is the gift of fortune ; but to write and read comes by nature.

Sec. Watch. Both which, master constable,

Dog. You have : I knew it would be your answer, well, for your favour, sir, why give God thanks, and make no boast of it ; and for your writing and reading, let that appear when there is no need of such *vanity*.[6] You are thought here to be the most *senseless*[7] and fit man for the Constable of the watch ; therefore bear you the lantern. This is your charge : you shall *comprehend*[8] all *vagrom*[9] men ; you are to bid any man stand, in the prince's name.

Sec. Watch. How if a' will not stand ?

Dog. Why, then, take no note of him, but let him go ; and presently call the rest of the watch together, and thank God you are rid of a knave.

Verg. If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the prince's subjects.

Dog. True, and they are to *meddle*[10] *with* none but the prince's subjects : you shall also make no noise in the streets ; for the watch to babble and to talk is most *tolerable*[11] and not to be endured.

1. Eternal damnation or condemnation.
2. Disloyalty
3. Duty Instructions.
4. Deserving.
5. Handsome, good-looking.
6. Ability, capacity.
7. Sensible.
8. Apprehend, arrest.
9. Vagrant.
10. Interfere.
11. Intolerable.

Scene III. A Street.

Enter **Dogberry** *and* Verges with the Watch.

Dog. I think you are all honest and loyal citizens.

Verg. Certainly, for otherwise they should suffer eternal 'salvation'.

Dog. Not, that would be too light a penalty for them, if they were found guilty of the least 'allegiance' (unfaithful), being as they are specially selected as watchmen for the night.

Verg. Now then, give them directions as to their duties, friend Dogberry.

Dog. First, tell me who is the most 'desartless' (—suitable) man for the post of constable ?

First Watch. Either Hugh Oatcake, sir. or George Seacole, for both of them are literate.

Dog. Approach, George Seacole. God has favoured you with a pretty name, fortune has given you good looks, and nature has given you learning.

Sec. Watch. And both of these gifts, sir constable—

Dog. You possess : I expected you would say so. Thank God for your good looks but do not be too proud of them ; as for your learning, display it when there is need for such ability. You are considered to be most sensible and suitable man for the post of constable. You can therefore carry the watchman's lantern. Now these are your duties: you will apprehend all vagrants and command all men to halt in the name of the Prince.

Sec. Watch. What am I to do if he does not obey my orders ?

Dog. In that case pay no more attention to him but immediately calling all the watchmen together offer thanks to God for escaping a scoundral.

Verg. For if he does not stop when ordered he is uot a subject of the prince and as such does not owe any allegiance to him.

Dog. Yes, he is outside their jurisdiction, for they are to interfere only with the prince's subjects. You should quietly go about the streets, for garrulity is intolerable in a watchman and no one can tolerate such a man.

Watch. We will rather sleep than talk : we know what *belongs*[1] to a watch.

Dog. Why, you speak like an *ancient*[2] and most quiet watchman ; for I cannot see how sleeping should offend : only have a care that your *bills*[3] be not stolen : well, you are to call at all the ale-houses, and bid those that are drunk get them to bed.

Watch. How if they will not ?

Dog. Why, then, let them alone till they are sober : if they make you not then the better answer, you may say they are not the men you took them for.

Watch. Well sir.

Dog. If you meet a thief, you may suspect him, by virtue of your office. to be no *true*[4] man ; and for such kind of men the less you meddle or make with them, why the more is for your honesty.

Watch. If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him ?

Dog. Truly, *by*[5] your office, you may ; but I think they that touch pitch will be defiled : the most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is to let him show himself what he is and steal out of your company.

Verg. You have been always called a merciful man, partner.

Dog. Truly, I would not hang a dog by my will, much *more*[6] a man who hath any honesty in him.

Verg. If you hear a child cry in the night, you must call to the nurse and bid her still it.

Watch. How if the nurse be asleep and will not hear us ?

Dog. Why then depart in peace, and let the child wake her with crying ; for the ewe that will not hear her lamb when it baes, will never answer a calf when he bleats.

Verg. 'Tis very true.

Dog. This is the end of the charge :—you, constable, are to present the prince's own person : if you meet the prince in the night, you may stay him.

1. Becomes. befits,
2. Experienced.
3. Halberds or pikes carried formerly by watchmen.
4. Honest.
5. By virtue of.
6. Less.

Watch. We will go to sleep rather than talk. We know what is the right thing to do for a watchman.

Dog That is true ; it shows that you are an experienced and quiet watchman : there is no reason why sleeping on the part of watchmen should be improper : only be careful that somebody does not rob you of your watchman's weapon, the pike. Next, yor are to visit the ale-houses and command people who are drunk to go to bed.

Watch. What if they refuse ?

Dog. Then do not interfere with them till they have recovered from their drunkenness : if they do not behave more politely even, then, you may excuse yourselves by saying that you had mistaken them for some other people.

Watch. Very good, sir.

Dog. If you by chance come across a thief you may, by virtue of your authority, suspect that he is a rogue ; but leave him alone, for the less you have to do with such dishonest men, the better for your own honesty.

Watch. Are we not to arrest him if he is beyond all doubt a thief ?

Dog. Of course, you have the authority to do so as watchmen, but you know one cannot escape the effects of an evil thing if one has dealings with it, for the saying goes, 'He that toucheth pitch shall be defiled therewith'. So the quietest way of dealing with a thief is to let him show his real character by stealing away.

Verg. Everybody says that you are a kind-hearted man, comrade.

Dog. I will not hurt a dog, much less a man who is good.

Verg. If you hear a baby cry while on your round you are to call upon the nurse to lull it.

Watch. Supposing the nurse is sleeping and does not wake up ?

Dog. You must then quietly go your own way, leaving the child to rouse her with its cries ; for if the cries of her own child do not waken her your cries cannot.

Verg. Right you are.

Eog. There are all the directions I have to give you. Remember, constable, you represent the Prince ; you have the power to stop the Prince himself if you meet him in the street at night.

Verg. Nay, *by'r lady*,[1] that I think a' cannot.

Dog. Five shillings to one on't with any man that knows the *statues*[2] he may stay him : marry, not without the prince be willing ; for, indeed, the watch ought to offend no man ; and it is an offence to stay a man against his will.

Verg. By'r lady I think it be so.

Dog. Ha, ah, ha ! Well, masters, good night : an there be any matter *of weight*[3] *chances*,[4] call up me, keep your fellows' *counsels*[5] and your own ; and good night. Come, neighbour.

Watch. Well masters, we hear our charge : let us go sit here upon the church-bench till two, and then all to bed.

Dog. One word more, honest neighbours. I pray you, watch about Signior Leonato's door, for the wedding being there to-morrow, there is a great *coil*[6] to-night. Adieu : be *vigitant*,[7] I beseech you.

[*Exeunt Dogberry and Verges.*

Enter **Borachio** *and* **Conrade**.

Bora. What, conrade !

Watch. [*Aside*] Peace ! stir not.

Bora. Conrade, I say !

Con. Here man, I am at the elbow.

Bora. *Mass*[8] and my elbow itched ; I thought there would a *scab*[9] follow.

Con. I will owe thee an answer for that, and now forward with thy tale.

Bora. Stand thee close then, under this *pent-house*,[10] for it drizzles rain ; and I will, like a *true drunkard*[11] utter all to thee.

Watch. [*Aside*] Some treason masters : yet stand close.

Bora. Therefore know I have earned of Don John a thousand ducats.

Con. Is it possible that any *villauny*[12] *should be so dear*[13] ?

Bora. Thou shouldst rather ask if it were possible any villany should be so rich ; for when rich villains

1. By the Virgin Mary.
2. Statutes.
3. Importance.
4. Happens.
5. Secrets.
6. Bustle. disturbance.
7. Vigilant.
8. An oath: By the Mass.
9. A low fellow : a term of contempt.
10. A shed with sloping roof.
11. Who reveals everything when drunk.
12. Roguery, wickedn
13. Should cost so much.

Verg. By Mary, that he has no power to do.

Dog. I would bet five shillings to one with any man familiar with the statutes that he may do it ; of course, if the prince is willing, for watchmen should give offence to none and it is offensive to stop a man against his wishes.

Verg. By Mary, you are right.

Dog. Ah, there you are ! Good-night to you all : wake me up if anything of importance occurs. Keep your comrades' secret and your own. Good-night to you once more. Let us go, friend Verges.

Watch. Well Sirs, we know our duties now : I propose we sit upon the bench inside the church porch till two o'clock and then go home to sleep.

Dog. Just one more thing and I have finished my duty friends. Keep a sharp watch near Signior Leonato's house, for there is much bustle on account of the marriage which comes off to-morrow. Farewel ; be very vigilant, I pray you.

[*Exeunt* Dogberry and Verges.

Enter Borachio, and Conrade.

Bora. Is it you, Conrade ?

Watch. [Aside] Hush ! Do not move.

Bora. Where are you, Conrade ?

Con. Here I am, my dear fellow, very close to you, at your elbow.

Bora. By the mass, my elbow irritated as a sign that wickedness was near, that a scab (also a mean fellow) was not far off.

Con. I will make you suffer for this some other time ; now proceed with your story.

Bora. Come and stand quietly under the sloping roof of this shed as it is drizzling. I will then reveal everything to you like a drunkard who lets out all secrets under the influence of liquor.

Watch. [Aside] There is some plot, sirs ; keep silent.

Bora. I have received a thousand ducats as my reward.

Con. Is it possible that my act of roguery could be rewarded so high ?

Bora. You should enquire instead whether any rogue could be so rich as to be able to afford the price, for when wealthy rogues

have need of poor ones, poor ones may make what price they will.

Con. I wonder at it.

Bora. That shows thou art *unconfirmed.*[1] Thou knowest that the fashion of a doublet, or a hat, or a cloak, is nothing to a man.

Con. Yes it is apparel.

Bora. I mean the fashion.

Con. Yes the fashion is the fashion.

Bora. *Tush*[2], I may as well say the fool's the fool. But seest thou not what a *deformed thief*[3] this fashion is ?

Watch. [Aside] I know that *Deformed* [4]; a' has been a vile thief this *seven year*[5]; a' *goes up and down like a gentleman*[6] : I remember his name.

Bora. Didst thou not hear somebody ?

Con. No ; 'twas the *vane*[7] on the house.

Bora. Seest thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this fashion is ? how giddily a' turns about all the *hot bloods*[8] between fourteen and five-and-thirty ? sometimes fashioning them like *Pharaoh's-soldiers*[8] in the *reechy*[9] painting, sometime like god *Bel's priests*[10] in the old church-window, sometime like the *shaven Hercules*[12] in the *smirched*[13] wormeaten tapestry.

Con. All this I see, and I see that the fashion wears out more apparel than the man. But art not thou thyself giddy with the fashion too, that thou hast shifted out of thy tale into telling me of the fashion ?

Bora. Not so, neither, but know that I have to-night wooed Margaret the Lady Hero's gentlewoman, by the name of Hero : she leans me out at her mistress' chamber-window, bids me a thousand times good night : I tell this tale vilely, I should first tell thee how the prince, Claudio and my master, planted and placed, and *possessed*[14] by my master Don John, saw afar off in the orchard this *amiable encounter* .[15]

Con. And they thought Margaret was Hero ?

Bora. Two of them did, the prince and Claudio, but the divel my master knew she was Margaret, and partly by his oaths, which first possessed them, partly by the dark night, which did deceive them, but chiefly, by my villany,

1. Inexperienced.
2. Nonsense, Rubbish.
3. Misshapen rascal or Deformiug, disfiguring robber.
4. Misshapen.
5. Indefinite.
6. Instead of being locked in prison.
7. Creaking of the weathercock.
8. Passionate young men.
9. A picture of the passage of the Red Sea.
10. Smoke-stained.
11. Story of Bel and the Dragon.
12. Beardless Hercules, so as to look effeminate.
13. Soiled.
14. Influenced, also informed.
15. Amorous meeting.

require the services of poor ones to do acts of roguery for them, the poor ones may dictate their own terms.

Con. This is a surprise to me.

Bora. That only proves that you are not experienced in the ways of rascality. You know that the form of clothes is of no importance to a man.

Con. Yes, it is ; it is his clothing.

Bora. I am speaking of the style of his clothes.

Con. What then ? The style is the style.

Bora. Nonsense ! I may just as well say that you are you, a fool. Haven't you noticed what a misshapenand deforming robber this style is.

Watch. (Aside) Yes, I knew this rascal, in disguise I have known him for years ; he goes about freely like a gentleman at large instead of being in prison. I can recall his name.

Bora. Silence ! Did you not hear some noise.

Con. No, it is only the weathercock that is creaking.

Bora. Do you not realise what a misshapen and disfiguring robber fashion is ? He quickly changes the appearance of hot-blooded youths, now making them look like the Egyptian soldiers in defaced old pictures and then like the priests of the Babylonian god Bel represented in the stained glass-windows of churches and again like Hercules without his beard (perhaps in order to make him look like a woman while serving in female clothes his mistress Omphale) in the soiled old tapestry hangings.

Con. Yes, I see all that ; and I also see that fashion demands more changes of clothes than are ever needed for legitimate use by a man. Has not this love of fashion turned your head too so that you have left off telling your story in order to talk about fashion ?

Bora. Nothing of the sort ; this is my story that this very night I have as a lover courted Hero's maid Margaret as Hero. She for my sake leaning out at the window of Hero's bed-room bade me a long lingering affectionate farewell. But I am telling you this story very disorderly. I ought to have first told you how Don Pedro, Claudio, already influenced by Don John with stories of Hero's illicit love affiars had themselves stationed in such a position as to see from some distance in the garden this amorous meeting.

Con. And did they take Margaret as Hero ?

Bora. Yes, Don Pedro and Claudio did take Margaret as Hero; but my master Don John, the Devil inperson, knew full well she was Margaret. Convinced partly by Don John's swearing to the truth of his allegations against Hero which greatly influenced them, partly by the darkness of the night which misled them but princi-

which did confirm any slander that Don John had made, away went Claudio enraged, swore he would meet her as he was *appointed*[1] next morning at the *temple*,[2] and there, before the whole congregation, shame her with what he saw o'er night, and send her home again without a husband.

First Watch. We charge you in the prince's name, stand!

Sec. Watch. Call up the right master Constable. We have here *recovered*[3] the most dangerous piece of *lechery*,[4] that ever was known in the commonwealth.

First Watch. And one Deformed is one of them: I know him, a' wears a *lock*[5]

Con. Masters, masters'.

Sec. Watch. You'll be made bring Deformed forth, I warrant you.

Con. Masters,—

First Watch. Never speak, we charge you, let us *obey*[6] you to go with us.

Bora. We are like to prove a *goodly commodity*,[7] being *taken up*[8] of these men's *bills*.[9]

Con. A commodity in question, I warrant you, come, we'll obey you. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV. **Hero's** *apartment.*
Enter **Hero, Margaret,** *and* **Ursula.**

Hero. Good Ursula, wake my cousin Beatrice, and desire her to rise.

Urs. I will lady.

Hero. And bid her come hither.

Urs. Well. [*Exit.*

Marg. Troth I think your other *rabato*[10] were better.

Hero. No, pray thee, good Meg, I'll wear this.

Marg. By my troth,'s not so good, and I warrant your cousin will say so.

Hero. My cousin's a fool, and thou art another, I'll wear none but this.

Marg. I like the new *tire*[11] *within*[12] excellently, if the *hair*[13] were *a thought browner*:[14] and your gown's a most rare fashion, i' faith, I saw the Duchess of Milan's gown that they praise so.

1. Instructed.
2. Church.
3. Discoveed.
4. Treachery.
5. Lavelock.
6. Persuade, induce.
7. (1) Goods (2) Bargain.
8. (1)Got on credit (2) Apprehendeb.
9. (1) Bonds (2) halberds.
10. Ruff, collar-band.
11. Head-dress (here made of hair).
12. In an inner room, off the stage.
13. Hair in the head-dress.
14. A shade darker.

pally by my wickedness in repeating Don John's false accusation against Hero, Claudio left the place highly enraged He vowed that he would keep his engagement in the church the next day and in the presence of the whole gathering disgrace her by throwing at her face all the evil doings of the preceding night to which he had been an eye-witness and send her back home unmarried.

First Watch. We call upon you to halt in the prince's name.

Sec. Watch. Wake up Master Dogberry. We have discovered the most villainous piece of treachery ever perpetrated in our kingdom.

First Watch. A man called Deformed is one of the gang. I know him well by the love-lock that he wears.

Con. Sirs, Sirs,—

Sec. Watch. You must produce the man Deformed, I assure you.

Con. Sirs,—

First Watch. Shut up, you ! We call upon you to let us command you to follow us.

Bora. We will turn out to be excellent 'goods' when we are 'got on credit' by the force of these men's 'bonds'.

Con. But it will be a doubtful and suspicious bargain for them, I assure you. Very well, we shall follow you peacefully. [*Exeunt*,

Scene IV. Hero's *apartment*.

***Enter* Hero, Margaret *and* Ursula.**

Hero. Gentle Ursula, awaken my cousin Beatrice and ask her to get up.

Urs. I shall do so at once, madam.

Hero, And ask her to see me.

Urs. All right. [*Exit*,

Marg. Truly, I think your other ruff would be better.

Hero. No, good Margaret, I prefer this one.

Marg. Truly speaking, this one is not as good as the other one, and I am sure the Lady Beatrice will bear me out.

Hero. Neither of you have any judgment : I will put on this one.

Marg. Your head-dress in the inner room would be perfect if the false hair in it were a shade darker : and truly your gown is splendid. I have seen the Duchess of Milan's gown which is praised so highly of.

Hero. O that *exceeds*[1] they say.

Marg. By my troth,'s but a night-gown *in respect of*[2] yours, cloth o' gold, and *cuts*,[3] and lac'd with silver, set with pearls, down sleeves, side sleeves, and skirts, *round underborne*[4] with a bluish tinsel, but for a fine *quaint*,[5] graceful and excellent fashion, yours is worth the *on't*.[6]

Hero. God give me joy to wear it, for my heart is exceeding heavy.

Marg. 'Twill be heavier soon by the weight of a man.

Hero. Fie upon thee ! art not ashamed ?

Marg. Of what, lady ? of speaking honourably ? Is not marriage honorurable in a beggar ? Is not your lord honourable without marriage ? I think you would have me say, *saving your reverence*,[7] 'a husband' : *an*[8] bad thinking do not *wrest*[9] true speaking, I'll offend nobody : is there any harm in 'the heavier for a husband'? None, I think, an it be the right husband and the right wife ; otherwise 'tis light, and not heavy : ask my Lady Beatrice else ; here she comes.

Enter **Beatrice,**

Hero. Good morrow cos.

Beat. Good morrow sweet Hero.

Hero. Why, how now ? do you speak in the sick *tune*.[10]

Beat. I am out of all other tune, methinks.

Marg. *Clap's into*[11] '*Light o' love*',[12] (that goes without *a burden*)[13] do you sing it, and I'll dance it . . .

Beat. Yea, light o' love, with your heels ! then, if your husband have stables enough, you'll see he shall lack no *barns*.[14]

Marg. O *illegitimate*[15] construction ! I scorn that with my heels.

Beat. 'Tis almost five o'clock, cousin : 'tis time you were ready. By my troth, I am exceeding ill : heigh-ho !

Marg. For a hawk, a horse, or a husband ?

Beat. For the letter that begins them all *H*.[16]

Marg. Well, an you be not turn'd Turk, there's no moresailing by the star.

1. Excels, is beyond praise.
2. Campared with.
3. Slashed sleeves of doublets.
4. Skirts trimmed all round with.
5. Elegant, choice.
6. Of it.
7. For the sake of propriety.
8. If.
9. Twist,
10. Tone, strain.
11. Let us quickly strike into or begin.
12. A lively dance measure.
13. A pun on (1) a refrain (2) load.
14. (1) Storehouses for grain (2) children.
15. Illogical.
16. That is, 'ache', older soft pronunciation.

Hero. It is said that it is simply magnificent.

Marg. Truly it is no better that a night-gown compared with yours. It is made of cloth interwoven with gold threads and has slashes and is braided with silver, inwrought with pearls, is furnished with the inner close sleeves and the outer loose ones and skirits trimmed all round with blue tinsel. But for elegance of make and excellence of style, yours is worth ten such gowns.

Hero. May God make me happy when I put in on ! I feel very sad just now.

Marg. Your bosom which is already heavy with grief will after your marriage be the heavier on account of your husband's head resting upon it.

Hero. For shame ! Don't your talk like this !

Marg. Why should I not ? One need not be ashamed of speaking about marriage which is an honourable state for all, rich and poor. Is not Count Claudio honourable even as a bachelor ? Unless wicked thoughts misinterpret honest words, I have not offended any one's sense of decorum by the harmless expression 'heavier by the weight of a man'. Perhaps you in your prudishness would have liked me to say for the sake of propriety 'a husband' instead of 'a man'. I mean one's own husband, not some one else's. If it be some one else's husband, not one's own, then you cannot call the woman heavy as I have called but she must be called light i.e., wanton. Here comes your cousin Beatrice : ask her if she does not agree with me.

Enter **Beatrice.**

Hero. Good morning, cousin.

Beat. Cood morning, dear Hero.

Hero. Is anything the matter ? You are speaking in a melancholy strain.

Beat. It seems I cannot speak on any other strain this morning.

Marg. Then let us quickly strike into the lively dance tune called 'Light o' love'. It has no bass or refrain to be sung by male voices. If you will sing it, I will do the dancing.

Beat. Yes, the title of the tune is an apt description of yourself, you light-footed wanton ! start dancing with your nimble feet. With you as his wife your husband will never be lacking in (i) storehouses for grain and (2) children, if he has stables enough.

Marg. What an illogical and improper interpretation to put on very words. I dismiss the insinuation with contempt.

Beat. It is getting late, Hero. By this time you aught to be dressed. As for me, I feel very sick. Heigh—ho, (a sigh) !

Marg. What are you sighing for ? A hawk, a horse or a husband ?

Beat. For none of them but because of pain *i.e., ache* (pronounced in those days like the letter which begins all those words, hawk, horse, husband *i.e.*, H) :

Marg. If you have not renounced your old male-hater's faith and become a convert to love, there is no trusting even the fixed pole star for purposes of navigation in future.

Beat. What means the fool *trow*[1]?

Marg. Nothing I, but God send every one their heart's desire!

Hero. These gloves the count sent me; they are an excellent perfume.

Beat. I am *stuffed*[2] cousin, I cannot smell.

Marg. A maid and *stuffed*[3]! there's goodly catching of cold.

Beat. O God help me! God help me, how long have you *professed apprehension*[4]?

Marg. Ever since you left it. Doth not my wit become me *rarely*[5]?

Beat. It is not seen enough, you should *wear it in your cap.*[6] By my troth, I am sick.

Marg. Get you some of this distill'd *Carduus Benedictus*,[7] and lay it to your heart, it is the only thing for a *qualm.*[8]

Hero. There thou prickest her with a thistle.

Beat. Benedictus! why Benedictus? you have some *moral*[9] in this Benedictus.

Marg. Moral! no, by my troth, I have no moral meaning, I meant plain holy-thistle. You may think purchance that I think you are in love: nay, by'rlady I am not such a fool to think what I *list*,[10] nor I list not to think what I can, nor indeed I cannot think, if I would think my heart out of thinking, that you are in love or that you will be in love or that you can be in love: Yet Benedick was such another, and now is he become a man: he swore he would never marry, and yet now, in despite of his heart, he *eats his meat without grudging*,[11] and how you may be converted I know not, but methinks you look with your eyes as other women do.

Beat. What pace is this that thy tongue keeps?

Marg. Not a *false gallop.*[12]

Re-enter **Ursula**.

Urs. Madam, withdraw. the prince the count, Signior Benedick, Don John, and all the gallants of the town are come to *fetch*[13] you to church.

Hero. Help to dress me good cos, good Meg, good Ursula. [*Exeunt.*

1. Think, wonder.
2. Have a cold.
3. Filled.
4. Set up for a wit.
5. Admirably.
6. Where it may be seen by all.
7. Blessed thistle, with pun on Benedick.
8. Sudden attack, spasm.
9. Some hidden meaning.
10. Please.
11. Grumbling i.e., resigned to the common lot of men.
12. A natural not a forced pace.
13. Escort, conduct.

Beat. I wonder what the to means.

Marg. Oh, it is nothing. May God grant us what we most long for!

Hero. These gloves have been sent to me as a present by Claudio. Are they not acutely scented?

Beat. I have a bad cold, so I cannot smell properly.

Marg. Young maiden filled (big with child), that's a nice way of catching cold, really?

Beat. May God save us! Since when have you beeome witty?

Marg. Even since you left off having wit (*i.e.*, clear perception, sharpness) enough to see when you are made a fool of. Does not my wit suit me admirably?

Beat. Make it more plain and conspicuous so that every one may see and understand it. Oh, how very ill I feel!

Marg. Get a little of the essence of the blessed or holy thistle, a universal remedy for all ills, especially those of the heart, and apply it to your heart. It is the best remedy for a sudden attack.

Hero. That's a smart thrust as with a thistle!

Beat. You say Benedictus, do you? Why, you must have some hidden meaning in your words.

Marg. Hidden meaning! no, by my faith, I have none. I meant what I said, the simple blessed thistle. Perhaps you imagine that I believe you are in love; no, I am not so foolish as to think what I please nor do I like to think what I might think; I can never imagine, even if I am to wear my heart out with thinking, that you were in love or will be ever in love or are capable of love, But one never knows! Benedick was just the same in his dislike of the opposite sex but he has now shown as great susceptibility to love as any other real man. He used to swear that he would ever be a confirmed bachelor, but now, in spite of his opinions, he (1) 'is in love and takes kindly to it or (2) 'in spite of his resolution to the contrary feeds on love, and likes his food' (3) in spite of his heart being touched with love, does not find himself any the worse for it (4) or inspite of his resolution not to marry, he is resigned to the common lot of man. I cannot say yet what will effect a change in your attitude but it seems to me that you look in the same direction and are attracted by the same object as the rest of your sex viz. husband *i.e.*, you are susceptible to love like other women.

Beat. Oh, at what a tremendous speed you speak on!

Marg. It is not a forced or unnatural spead, (*i.e.*, I mean what I speak).

Enter **Ursula.**

Urs. You must now retire to your dressing-room, my lady, and dress, for all the lords and gentlemen have come to escort you to the church for the ceremony,

Hero. Oh, help me to dress, please. all of you. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V: *Another room in* Leonato's *house.*

Enter **Leonato,** *with* **Dogberry** *and* **Verges.**

Leon. What would you with me, honest neighbour ?

Dog. Marry sir, I would have some *confidence*[1] with you that *decerns*[2] you nearly.

Leon. Brief I pray you, for you see it is a busy time with me.

Dog. Marry this it is sir.

Verg. Yes, in truth it is, sir.

Leon. What is it, my good friends ?

Dog. Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a *little off the matter*,[3] an old man sir, and his wits are not so *blunt*[4] as, God-help, I would desire they were ; but, in faith, honest as the skin between his brows. 12

Verg. Yes I thank God, I am as honest as any man living, that is an old man and no honester than I.

Dog. Comparisons are *odorous*[5] ; *palabras*[6], neighbour Verges.

Leon. Neighbours, you are *tedious.*[7]

Dog. It pleases your worship to say so, but we are the poor Duke's officers ; but truly, for mine own part, if I were as tedious as a king, I could find it in my heart to bestow it all of your worship. 21

Leon. All thy tediousness on me, ah ?

Dog. Yea, an 'twere a thousand pound more than 'tis ; for I hear as good *exclamation*[8] on your worship as of any man in the city, and though I be but a poor man, I am glad to hear it.

Verg. And so am I.

Leon. I would fain know what you have to say.

Verg. Marry sir our watch to-night, *excepting your worship's presence*[9] ha' ta'en a couple of as *arrant*[10] knaves as any in Messina. 31

Dog. A good old man sir, he will be talking ; as they say, When the age is in, wit is out, God help us ! it is a world to see : well said, i' faith, neighbour Vergus, well,

1. Conference, conversation.
2. Concerns.
3. Beside the point, wide of the mark.
4. Sharp.
5. Odious.
6. (Spanish few words.
7. Tiresome.
8. Acclamation(praise).
9. Making him out to be an arrant knave.
10. Downright, thorough.

Scene V. Another Room *in* Leonato's House.

Enter **Leonato with Dogberry *and* Verges.**

Leon. What is your business with me, my dear fellow ?

Dog. My lord, I should like to have a brief conversation with you on a matter that concerns you gratly.

Leon. Be as brief as possible, for I am too busy.

Dog. Well, sir, this is the matter.

Verg. Yes, sir, that is exactly the matter.

Leon. But what is the matter precisely, my good men ?

Dog. My friend Verges, sir, talks always a little beside the point. He is old, sir, and so his intelligence is not so sharp as I should like it to be ; but truly a very honest man.

Verg. True ; I am thankfull to God that I am as honest as any man on earth who is eqally honest and old.

Dog. Comparisons are no good : let us be brief, friend Verges.

Leon. My good men, you talk too much, you are tiresome.

Dog. It is very kind of your lordship to say so ; we are only the prince's poor watchmen ; but left to myself, I would have gladly made a present of all my tiresomeness to you if I had as much of it as a king.

Leon. What, present all your tiresomeness to me ?

Dog, Yes, sir, even if it were a thousand times more than it is, for I hear your lordship as highly praised as any man in Messina : though it may be thought impertinent of a poor man like myself to say so, yet allow me to say that I am delighted to hear it.

Verg. It is a pleasure to me, too.

Leon. Won't you tell me your business ?

Verg. Well, sir, our watchman arrested last night, two as thorough scoundrels (begging your lordship's pardon) as are to be found in all Messina.

Dog. He is a good fellow, sir, but he must be talkative ; the saying goes, sir, commonsense takes leave of us when we grow old ; it is a wonderful sight. Very well put, friend Verges. "All's right

God's a good man[1] ; an two men ride of a horse, one must ride behind. An honest soul,!' faith, sir; by my troth he is, as ever broke bread ; but God is to be worshipped ; all men are not alike ; alas, good neighbour !

Leon. Indeed, neighbour, he comes too short of you.

Dog. Gifts the God gives.

Leon. I must leave you.

Dog. One word, sir : our watch, sir, have indeed *comprehended*[2] two *aspicious*[3] persons, and we would have them this morning examined before your worship.

Leon. Take their examination yourself and bring it me ; I am now in great haste, as it may appear unto you.

Dog. It shall be *suffigance*[4],

Leon. Drink some wine ere you go : fare you well.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. My lord, they stay for you to give your daughter to her husband.

Leon, I'll wait upon them : I am ready.

[*Exeunt Leonato and Messenger.*

Dog. Go, good partner, go, get you to Francis Seacole ; bid him bring his pen and inkhorn to the gaol ; we are now to examine these men.

Verg. And we must do it wisely.

Dog. We will spare for no wit, I warrant you : here's that shall drive some of them to a noncome ; only get the learned writer to set down our *excommunications*[5] and meet me at the gaol. [*Exeunt,*

ACT IV.

Scene I. *A Church.*

Enter **Don Pedro, Don John, Leonato, Friar Francis, Claudio, Benedick, Hero, Beatrice,** *and attendants.*

Leon. Come, Friar Francis, be brief : only to the plain form of marriage, and you shall recount their particular duties afterwards.

Friar. You come hither, my lord, to marry this lady.

Claud.. No.

1. A proverd all's right with the world.
2. Apprehended, arrested.
3. Suspicious.
4. Sufficient.
5. Communication.

with the world." Where two men are concerned, one must lead, the other must follow ; so let him have the first say, sir. He is a good fellow, sir, as true a man as ever lived. All men are not equally clever ; poor fellow !

Leon. Really, friend, he does not come up to your high level of excellence,

Dog. The credit for my qualities belongs to God, not to me.

Leon. It is time I left you.

Dog. Just one word more Sir, The watchmen really arrested two suspicious persons, and we want to produce them before your lordship this morning for investigation.

Leon. Hold the enquiry yourself and submit the report to me later : I am too busy to attend to it just now, as you can see.

Dog. That is sufficient, Sir.

Leon. Have a drink before you leave : good-bye.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Sir, they are waiting in the church for you to come and give the bride away.

Leon. I am ready and will come immediately.

Exeunt Leonato and Messenger.

Dog. Comrade Verges, go to Francis and ask him to come to the prison with pen and ink, for we must now examine these arrested persons.

Verg. We must examine them intelligently and thoroughly.

Dog. Never fear ; there shall be no lack of intelligence ; I, guarantee ; I have enough brains to non-plus them. Only we must have Seacole in the prison to record the examination. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

Scene I. A Church

Enter **Don Pedro, Don John, Leonato, Friar Francis,**

Claudio, Benedick, Hero, Beatrice, and attendants.

Leon. Friar Francis, pray make the ceremony as short as possible ; be satisfied with the main point of the marriage service now and address them on the duties of married life later.

Friar. Count Claudio, have you come here to marry the lady Hero ?

Claud. Not at all.

Leon. To be married to her: Friar, you come to marry her.

Friar. Lady, you come hither to be married to this count,

Hero. I do.

Friar. If either of you know any *inward impediment*[1] why you should not be *conjoined*,[2] I charge you, on your souls, to utter it.

Claud. Know you any, Hero ?

Hero. None, my lord.

Friar, Know you any, count ?

Leon. I dare make his answer, none.

Claud. O, what men dare do ! what men may do ! what men daily do, not knowing what they do !

Bene. How now ! interjections ? Why, then, some be of laughing, as, ha, ha, he !

Claud. Stand thee *by*[3], Friar. Father, by your leave:
Will you with free and *unconstrained*[4] soul
Give me this maid, your daughter ?

Leon, As freely, son, as God did give her me.

Claud. And what have I to give you back, whose worth
May *counterpoise*[5] this rich and precious gift ?

D. Pedro. Nothing unless you *render*[6] her again.

Claud. Sweet prince, you *learn*[7] me noble thankfulness.
There, Leonato, take her back again :
Give not this rotten orange to your friend ;
She's but the sign and semblance of her honour.
Behold how like a maid she blushes here !
O, what *authority*[8] and show of truth
Can cunning sin cover itself withal !
Comes not that *blood*[9] as modest evidence
To witness *simple*[10] virtue ? Would you not swear.
All you that see her, that she were a maid,
By these exterior shows ? But she is none :
She knows the heat of a luxurious bed ;
Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty.

1. Secret reason.
2. Joined together, married.
3. Aside.
4. Free, voluntary.
5. Balance, equalise.
6. Give back, return.
7. Teach.
8. Guarantee.
9. Blush,
10. Pure.

Leon. You put it wrongly, priest ; it is you who will marry her : Claudio is to be married to her.

Friar. Lady Hero, are you here to be married to Count Claudio ?

Hero. I am.

Friar. If either of you have any secret knowledge of any obstacle to this marriage, I solemnly call upon you are anxious that your soul should be saved, to tell me of it.

Claud. Do you know of any, Hero ?

Hero. No, my lord.

Frair. And do you know of any, Count Claudio ?

Leon. I think I can make bold to reply for him in the negatives.

Claud. Oh, what tremendous boldness people have ! what bold things people do in their ignorance every day !

Bene. Dear me ! what have we here, alot of exclamations, eh ? Let me supply some merry ones such as, 'ah, ha, he' !

Claud. Stand aside for a while, good priest. (To Leonato) Father, excuse me if I ask you if you give your daughter in marriage to me of your own free will.

Leon. Yes, my son, as willingly and atonce as God gave her to me.

Claud. What can I give you in return for this priceless treasure that you are giving me ?

D. Pedro You can do so only by returning back to him.

Claud. My lord, I thank you very much for this valuable suggestion. I return her to you, Leonato : do not give away this faithless girl to any friend of yours : she has only the outward appearance of chastity, but she is really unchaste. See outwardly she is bashful as an innocent maiden ! O,how artfully can vice hide itself under the looks of virtue ! one would naturally think that her blushes were a proof of her maiden modesty and purity. Would not all of you who judge her only by these outward signs prepared to swear that she was an innocent virgin ? But it is just the other way ; she has the exprience of wanton passion ; hers are the blushes of shame, not of maiden modesty.

Leon. What do you mean, my lord ?
Claud. Not to be married.
Not to *knit*[1] my soul, to an approved *wanton*.[2]
Leon. Dear, my lord, if you, in your own proof.
Have vanquish'd the resistance of her youth,
And made defeat of her virginity,—
Claud. I know what you would say : if I have known her,
You will say she did embrace me as a husband,
And so *extenuate*[3] the '*forehand sin*[4]:
No, Leonato,
I never tempted her with word too large :[5]
But, as brother to his sister, show'd
Bashsul sincerity and *comely*[6] love.
Hero. And seem'd I ever otherwise to you ?
Claud. Out on thy seeming ! I will write against it ;
You seem to me as *Dian*[7] in her *orb*.[8]
As chaste as is the bud ere it be blown :
But you are more *intemperate*[9] in your *blood*[10]
Than Venus, or those pamper'd animals.
That rage in savage sensuality.
Hero. Is my lord well, that he doth speak so wide ?
Leon. Sweet prince, why speak not you ?
D. Pedro. What should I speak ?
I stand dishonour'd that have *gone about*[11]
To link my dear friend to a *common stale*.[12]
Leon. Are these things spoken, or do I but dream ?
D. John. Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.
Bene. This looks not like a nuptial.
Hero. True ! O God !
Claud. Leonato, stand I here ?
Is this the prince ? is this the prince's brother ?
Is this face Hero's ? are our eyes our own ?
Leon. All this is so : but what of this, my lord ?
Claud. Let me but *move*[13] one question to your daughter ;
And, by that fatherly and *kindly*[14] power.
That you have in her, bid her answer truly,

1, Bind, joint.
2. Loose, lustful woman.
3. Mitigate, palliate.
4. Sin of anticipating marriage.
5. Free, licentious,
6. Maidenly, pure modest love.
7. Moon-goddess, also of chastity.
8. Orbit, path in the sky.
9. Unres-trained, licentious.
10. Passion.
11. Tried, made endeavour.
12. Strumpet public woman
13. Put.
14 Natural.

Leon. Explain yourself, sir.

Claud. I refuse to be married to her, to be united to a proved prostitute.

Leon. My lord, if you yourself have sorely tempted her and by the strength of your importunity overcome her youthful resistance and robbed her of her virgin purity.—

Claud. I know how you would argue. You would suggest that she prematurely allowed me to have all the rights of a husband knowing full well that she was going to be my wife and thus you would mitigate the sin of anticipating marriage. No, Leonato ; I never tempted her with broad hints. But my love for her was almost brotherly in its purity and chastity.

Hero. And did I ever appear anything but pure in my love ?

Claud. Off with what you appear to be ? I will denounce it as false to all the world. You appear as pure as the moon in her orbits like the virgin goddess of the sky : you appear as pure as the sweet unopened bud unkissed by the breeze. But you are more passionate and lustful than Venus, the goddess of love, than those over-fed beasts that live in open sexual habits.

Hero. Surely you are ill, my lord, or you would never speak so far from the purpose.

Leon. Dear Prince, why are you silent ?

D. Pedro. What could I say ? I feel disgraced by trying to marry my friend to a prostitute.

Leon. Do I really hear these terrible indictments or am I in the land of unreality ?

D. John. Sir, they are stern realities and all these charges are true.

Bene. Certainly a strange marriage this !

Hero. Facts ? My God !

Claud. Leonato, don't you recognise us all ? Are we not ourselves and are not our faculties our own ?

Leon. Yes ; but what has that got to do with it ?

Claud. Allow me to put only question to Hero ; ask her to give a truthful reply by virtue of your parental authority and love.

Leon. I charge thee do so, as thou art my child.
Hero. O, God defend me ! how am I beset !
What kind of *catechising*[1] call you this ?
Claud. To make you answer truly to your name.
Hero. Is it not Hero ? Who can blot that name
With any just reproach ?
Claud. Marry, that can Hero :
Hero itself[2] can blot out Hero's virtue.
What man was he talk'd with you yesternight
Out at your window betwixt twelve and one ?
Now, if you are a maid, answer to this,
Hero. I talk'd with no man at that hour, my lord.
D. Pedro. Why, then are you no maiden, Leonato.
I am sorry you must hear ; upon mine honour.
Myself, my brother and this grieved count
Did see her, hear her, at that hour last night
Talk with a ruffian at her chamber-window ;
Who hath indeed, most like a *liberal villain*.[3]
Confess'd the vile *encounters*[4] they have had
A thousand times in secret.
D. John, Fie, fie ! they are not to be named, my lord.
Not to be spoke of :
There is not chastity enough in language.
Without offence to utter them. Thus, pretty lady,
I am sorry for thy *much misgovernment*.[5]
Claud. O Hero, what a Hero hadst thou been,
If half thy outward graces had been placed
About thy thoughts and *counsels*[6] of thy heart !
But fare thee well, most foul, most fair ! farewell,
Thou pure impiety and impious purity !
For thee I'll lock up all the gates of love.
And on my eyelids shall *conjecture*[7] hang.
To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm.
And never shall it more be *gracious*.[8]
Leon. Hath no man's dagger here a point for me ?
[*Hero swoons.*

1. Questioning.
2. The name Hero.
3 Licentious rogue.
4. Meetings.
5. Extreme lack of self-restraint, licentiousness.
6. Promptings.
7. Suspicion.
8. Attractive.

Leon. Answer him truly, Hero, if you are my child.

Hero. Help me, O God ! How hard pressed I am on all sides ! why am I subjected to this cross-examination at all?

Claud. So that you may tell me truly what you are.

Hero. Am I not Hero, the same as ever ? Who can with truth cast any stigma on that stainless name ?

Claud. You Yourself can do it ; the name 'Hero' can efface the Lady Hero's virtue. Tell me with whom did you converse between the hours of twelve and one last night at your bed-room window ? If you are as innocent as you profess to be, you can give me a straight answer.

Hero. I did no such thing at that time, Count.

D. Pedro. Your denial of what you know to be true entablished your guilt. I regret having to tell you, Leonato, as I value my honour, that Don John, the aggrieved Claudio and myself saw and heard holding such a conversation with a scoundrel at her window ; that licentious and unblushing rascal has admitted that they had such secret amours with great frequency.

D. John. For shame ! The man's statement is too shocking to bear repetition. No language is expressive enough to convey it without using words that would shock the hearers. Fair Lady, I am very much grieved at your wild incontinence.

Claud. O, Hero, what an ideal woman would you have been if your head and heart had possessed even half the grace and beauty of your looks ! But I take leave of you who are at once pretty in person and ugly at heart, you who are a beautiful sinner and a sinfeel beauty ! It is because of you that I will from now on shut my heart on all feelings of love : so henceforth I shall see pretty women with the eye of suspicion so that I shall think nothing but evil of them and evermore shall beauty appear to me to be devoid of charm.

Leon. Is there no one here, who, out of pity, will relieve me of my suffering by stabbing me to death ? *Hero swoons.*

Beat. Why, how now, cousin ! wherefore sink you down ?

D. John. Come, let us go. These things, come thus to light.
Smother her spirits up.[1]

[*Exeunt Don Pedro, Don John and Claudio.*

Bene. How doth the lady ?

Beat. Dead, I think, Help, uncle !
Hero ! why, Hero ! Uncle ! Signior Benedick !
Friar ! Ill

Leon. O Fate ! take not away thy heavy hand.
Death is the fairest cover for her shame.
That may be wish'd for.

Beat. How now, cousin Hero !

Friar. Have comfort, lady.

Leon. Dost thou *look up* ?[2]

Friar. Yea, wherefore should she not ?

Leon. Wherefore ! Why, doth not every earthly thing.
Cry shame upon her ? Could she here deny
The story that is printed in her *blood*[3] ?
Do not live, Hero ; do not ope thine eyes :
For, did I think thou wouldst not quickly die,
Thought I thy spirits were stronger than they shames,
Myself would, on the *rearward of reproaches*,[4]
Strike at thy life. Grieved I, I had but one ?
Chid[5] I for that at *frugal nature's frame*[6] ?
O, one too much by thee ! Why had I one ?
Why ever wast thou lovely in my eyes ?
Why had I not with charitable hand.
Took up a beggar's issue at my gates
Who *smirched*[7] thus and *mired*[8] with infamy,
I might have said 'No part of it is mine ;
This shame *derives itself*[9] from unknown loins ?
But mine and mine I loved and mine I praised
And mine that I was *proud on*,[10] mine so much
That I myself was to myse!f not mine,
Valuing of her,—why, she, O, she is fallen
Into a pit of ink, that the wide sea

1. Choke, stifle,
2. Cheer up.
3. Blushes.
4. After heaping rebukes upon you.
5. Shall I scold.
6. Parsimonious dispensation or ordinance of Nature.
7. Soiled, sullied.
8. Made foul.
9. Has its origin, springs.
10. Proud of.

Beat. Hero, my cousin, why do you faint ?

D. John. We had better more away from here. The discovery of sins has cruhed her spirit.

Exeunt Don Pedro, Don John and Claudio.

Bene. How is the Lady Hero ?

Beat. I am afraid, she is dead. Help me, all of you, to bring her round !

Leon. Merciful Destiny ! do not spare her, let her die. Death is the best and most desirable way of making us forget her disgrace.

Beat. Oh, my cousin !

Friar. Don't be so disconsolate, madam.

Leon. Can you bear to face us and be cheerful again ?

Friar. Why, is there any reason why she should not.

Leon. You ask me the reason for it, do you? Does not everybody openly denounce her ? She could not refute the charges which her blushes proved to be true. Die, Hero, die : if I knew that you would not die but would recover, that your youthful life would survive such a disgrace, then I myself would kill you after reproaching you with your sins. I complained that I had only one child and railed at Nature's miserly dispensation that gave me that one child only. Now, alas ! I have come to think that Nature has given me one too many. Why did not Fate withhold even that one from me ? Why were you, child, ever an object of delight to me ? It would have been far better if I had out of generosity adopted a foundling left at my door, for then if it had in a similar manner been sullied and stained, I would have disclaimed any responsibility for the disgrace by saying that she was not child of mine, being born of unknown parents. But my own child, the one I was so very fond of and so highly thought and spoke of and took such pride in, she who was so entirely mine that my own self seemed unimportant to myself, so highly did I value her,—why she, even she is so darkly stained with sin that even all the waters of the deep cannot cleanse her nor can all its salt preserve her corrupt body from decay.

Hath drops too few to wash her clean again
And salt too little which may season give
To her *foul-tainted*[1] flesh !
Bene. Sir, sir, be patient.
For my part, I am so *attired in wonder*,[2]
I know not what to say.
Beat. O, on my soul, my cousin is belied !
Bene. Lady, were you her bedfellow last night ?
Beat. No, truly not ; although, until last night,
I have this twelvemonth been her bedfellow.
Leon. Confirm'd, confirm'd ! O, that is stronger made
Which was before *barr'd up with ribs of iron* ![3]
Would the two princes lie, and Claudio lie,
Who loved her so, that, speaking of her foulness,
Wash'd it with tears ? Hence from her ! let her die.
Friar. Hear me a little ;
For I have only silent been so long,
And given way unto this course of fortune,
By noting of the lady : I have mark'd
A thousand *blushing apparitions*[4] start
Into her face, a thousand innocent shames
In angel whiteness beat away those blushes ;
And in her eye there hath appear'd a fire.
To *burn the errors*[5] that these princes hold
Against her maiden truth. Call me a fool ;
Trust not my reading nor my observations,
Which with *experimental seal*[6] doth warrant
The tenour of my *book*,[7] trust not my age,
My reverence, calling, nor *divinity*,[8]
If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here
Under some *bitting error*[9].
Leon. Friar, it cannot be.
Thou seest that all the grace that she hath left
That she will not add to her damnation
A sin of *perjury*[10] ; she not denies it :
Why seek'st thou then to cover with excuse
That which appears in *proper*[11] nakedness ?
Friar. Lady, what man is he you are accused of ?

1. Corrupted, polluted.
2. Wrapped in amazement.
3. Strengthened by.
4. Blushes suddenly appearing and as suddenly disappearing.
5. As though they were heretics.
6. The seal of long experience.
7. Reading.
8. Knowledge of holy things.
9. Cruel misunderstanding.
10. False swearing.
11. its ownn reality.

Bene. Sir, do not be hasty in your judgment. As for me, I am so wrapped in astonishment that I cannot as yet think calmly on the matter.

Beat. I am prepared to risk my salvation for my conviction that Hero is falsely accused.

Bene. Did you sleep with Hero last night ?

Beat. No, I did not, though I have slept with her always for the last one year except last night.

Leon. Oh, this strengthens the accusation which was already as strong as iron bars ! It is inconceivable that Don Pedro, Don John and Claudio who loved her so dearly that in speaking of her misdeeds he burst into tears, should tell falsehoods. Come away : leave her to die alone.

Friar. Listen to me for a moment, please ; I have refrained from speaking until now and let matters take their course without any protest, because I have been engaged in observing the Lady Hero. I have seen her cheeks burning alternately with furious blushes of righteous indignatfon and growing pale with the whiteness of angelic purity and injured innocence. I have seen her eye suddenly flash with the fire of scorn as though to consume the false heresies of these princely disbelievers in her maiden innocence. If I am wrong, then call me a fool and think that my learning is useless and that all my first-hand knowledge of life, acquired by observation of men and things which sets the seal of experience on what I have read in books, is false. If you do not find that this excellent lady is the innocent victim of some cruel mistake, then have no faith in and regard for my old age, my dignity as an old man, my priestly office and my sacred knowledge.

Leon. Reverend priest, you are wrong. The only redeeming quality left in her is that she does not add to her offence by falsely swearing about her innocence. She does not deny her guilt. Why do you then try to screen under a plausible explanation a sin which stands exposed in all its ugly reality ?

Friar. Who is the person, good lady, with whom you are accused of having guilty relations ?

Hero. They know that do accuse me : I know none,
If I know more of any man alive.
Than that which maiden modesty doth warrant,
Let all my sins *lack*[1] mercy, O my father,
Prove you that any man with me conversed,
At hours *unmeet*,[2] or that I yesternight
Maintain'd the change of[3] words with any creature,
Refuse[4] me, hate me, torture me to death !

Friar. There is some strange *misprision*[5] in the princes.

Bene. Two of them have the very *bent*[6] of honour,
And if their wisdoms be misled in this,
The *practice*[7] of it lives in John the bastard.
Whose spirits toil in *frame*[8] of villanies.

Leon. I know not. If they speak but truth of her,
These hands shall tear her ; if they wrong her honour,
The proudest of them shall *well*[9] hear of it.
Time hath not yet so dried this blood of mine,
Nor age so eat up my invention,
Nor fortune made such *havoc*[10] of my means,
Nor my bad life reft me so much of friends.
But they shall find, awaked in such a kind,
Both strength of limb and policy of mind,
Ability in means and choice of friends.
To *quit*[11] me of them throughly.

Friar Pause awhile.
And let my counsel sway you in this case.
Your daughter here the princes left for dead,
Let her awhile be secretly kept in,
And publish it that she is dead indeed ;
Maintain a *mourning ostentation*[12]
And on your family's old monument
Hang mournful *epitaphs*[13] and do all rights
That appertain unto a burial.

Leon. What shall become of this ? What will this do ?

Friar. Marry this well carried, shall on her behalf
Change slander to remorse ; that is some good,
But not for that dream I on this strange course,

1. Fail to meet with.
2. Improper.
3. Exchanged words with, talked with.
4. Deny.
5. Misunderstanding, mistake.
6. Direction, inclination.
7. Plotting. contriving.
8. Planning villainous schemes.
9. Certainly
10. Waste.
11. Repuite, retaliate.
12. Appeareance of mourning, funeral rites.
13. Verser. hung on the tomb.

Hero. You had better ask my accusers, for I am ignorant of it. May my soul be for ever lost if I have had at any time more intimate relations with any man than are consistent with a virgin's honour ! O father, if you can establish that I talked with any man at the unbecoming hours of the night or that I last nignt held conversation with any person, you are free to disown me, detest me and even to put me to any painful form of death !

Friar. Her princely accusers are labouring under some serious mistake.

Bene. Don Pedro and Claudio are the very soul of honour. They must have been duped and, if so, it must be of the bastard Don John's contriving, because his nature delights in the planning of villainous deeds.

Leon. I do not know what to think. But this I know—if their allegations against her are true, I will tear her to pieces ; if on the other hand they are trying to sully her honour through no fault of her, then, for all their exalted rank, I will make them pay for it, I am old, yet my years have not so robbed me of my strength, nor is so paralysed my mental activity, nor have my resources been so reduced by adversity, nor have my evil ways so alienated my friends from me that I cannot, when roused in such a manner, muster up all these, strength, cleverness, money and friends, to avenge myself fully on them.

Friar. Wait for a time and be guided by my advice in this matter. The princes, when they left us, thought your daughter to be dead. Keep her in concealment for sometime and give out that she really did die ; put up a show of mourning, attach eulogistic inscription to the family vault and perform all due funeral ceremonies.

Leon. What good will come of it ? How will this help us ?

Friar. If this plan is carried out successfully, it will make people veer round in her favour, for pity and regret will take the place of condemnation. That will be a great advantage. But it is

But on this *travail*[1] look for greater birth.
She dying, as it must be so maintain'd,
Upon the *instant*[2] that she was accused,
Shall be lamented, pitied and excused
Of every hearer : for it so falls out
That what we have we prize not to the worth
Whiles we enjoy it, but being lack'd and lost,
Why, then we rack the value, then we find
The virtue that possession would not show us
Whiles it was ours. So will it fare with Claudio :
When he shall hear she died upon his words,
The *idea*[3] of her life shall sweetly creep
Into his *study of imagination*,[4]
And every lovely *organ*[5] of her life
Shall come apparell'd in more precious *habit*,[6]
More *moving-delicate*[7] and full of life,
Into the eye and prospect of his soul,
Than when she lived indeed ; then shall he mourn,
If ever love had interest in his liver,
And wish he had not so accused her,
No, though he thought his accusation true.
Let this be so, and doubt not but *success*[8]
Will fashion the *event*[9] in better shape
Than I can lay it down in *likelihood*[10].
But if all aim but this be levell'd false,
The supposition of the lady's death
Will quench the wonder of her infamy :
And if it *sort*[11] not well; you may conceal her.
As best befits her wounded reputation,
In some *reclusive*[12] and *religious life*,[13]
Out of all eyes, tongues, minds and *injuries*[14]
Bene. Signior Leonato, let the Friar *advise you*.[15]
And though you know my *inwardness*[16] and love
Is very *much*[17] unto the prince and Claudio.
Yet, by mine honour, I will deal in this,
As secretly and justly as your soul
Should with your body,

1. Excessive labour.
2. Very moment.
3. Image, conception
4. Reflections of mind.
5. Feature.
6. Garb, appearance,
7. Touchingly graceful, thrillingly lovely.
8. Sequel, good or bad
9. Result-
10. Supposition, probability.
11. Turn out
12. Secluded
13. Conventual life, nunnery.
14. Wrong, injustice.
15. By your adviser.
16. Intimacy
17. Great.

not only with this object in view that I advise this course of action ; but I expect greater results from this labour. Her supposed death at the very moment of accusation will make all people mourn and regret her death and believe in her innocence, it generally happens that we do not attach the right value to a thing while we actually possess it, but after we have lost it we exaggerate its value, discovering the worth to which possession made us blind, The same will be the case with Claudio ; when he is told that she died immediately and so almost in consequence of his rebuker her fair image of will softly steal into and mingle with the imaginative musings of his mind, all her beauty and loveliness of form and character will appear invested with greater splendour, more touchingly graceful and lively before his imaginative vision than when she was alive ; then if ever his heart was touched with love, he will mourn her death and wish he had never brought that charge against her. If you act upon my advice, then rest assured that things will turn out even better in the long run than we can guess. But even if all our anticipations are not fulfilled, there is at least one thing we are sure to achieve, *i.e.*, the belief in the lady's death will extinguish all interest in and stop all discussion of her sin. If things do not turn out as we expect, she may, as becomes one disgraced like her, seek the seclusion of a nunnery out of the reach of praying eyes, gossiping tongues, prurient thoughts and injustice of a heartless world.

Bene. Sir, you should follow the advice of the good priest : and though, as you are aware, I am on terms of the greatest intimacy and friendship with Don Pedro and Claudio, yet I will faithfully stand by you and keep your secret in this affair.

Leon. Being that I flow in grief,
The smallest twine may lead me.

Friar. 'Tis well consented : *presently*[1] away ;
For to strange sores, strangely they strain the cure.
Come, lady, die to live, this wedding-day
Perhaps is but *prolong'd*[2] : have patience and endure.
[*Exeunt all but Benedict and Beatrice*]

Bene. Lady Beatrice, have you wept all this while ?

Beat. Yea, and I will weep a while longer.

Bene. I will not desire that.

Beat. You have no reason : I do it freely.

Bene. Surely I do believe your fair cousin is wronged.

Beat. Ah, how much might the man *deserve of me*[3] that would right her !

Bene. Is there any way to show such friendship ?

Beat. A very *even*[4] way, but no such friend.

Bene. May a man do it ?

Beat. It is a man's office, but not yours.

Bene. I do love nothing in the world so well as you : is not that strange ?

Beat. As strange as the thing I know not. It were as possible for me to say, I loved nothing so well as you, but believe me not, and yet I lie not, I confess nothing, nor I deny nothing, I am sorry for my cousin.

Bene. By my sword, Beatrice, thou lovest me.

Beat. Do not swear, and eat it.

Bene. I will swear by it that you love me ; and I will make him eat it that says I love not you.

Beat. Will you not *eat your word* ?[5]

Bene. With no sauce that can be devised to it, I protest I love thee.

Beat. Why, then, God forgive me !

Bene. What offence, sweet Beatrice ?

Beat. You have strayed me a *happy hour*,[6] I was about to protest I loved thee.

Bene. And *do it*[7] with all thy heart.

1. Immediately, at once.
2. Postponed.
3. Deserve and get.
4. Plain.
5. Back out of your promise.
6. Lucky, just in time.
7. Protest, profess.

Leon. Being overwhelmed with sorrow, I have lost all confidence in myself and I repose my trust in any advice that is given to me.

Friar. It is good of you to agree : the lady must depart at once, for desperate diseases need desperate remedies. Come, dear lady, consent to be taken as dead in order that you live happily ever after : I am almost sure your marriage is only postponed, you have only to bear your grief with patience for a while.

[*Exeunt* all but **Benedick** and **Beatrice**.

Bene. Beatrice, you have been crying all this time, I am afraid?

Beat. Yes, and I mean to go on for some time more.

Bene. But I don't like you to do it.

Beat. There is no need for you to do that, for I am crying of my own accord.

Bene. I am sure Hero has been falsely accused.

Beat. Oh, there is little I would deny the man who would vindicate her honour.

Bene. Is there no way of doing such an act of friendship,

Beat. The way is very easy, but I know of no one who would do it for sake of his friendship for me.

Bene. But does it lie in a man's power to do it ?

Beat. Yes, it is a man's job but you are not man enough to do it.

Bene. Is it not a strange thing that I love you better than anything on earth.

Beat. As strange as the things that I have never heard of. "As strange as—oh, I know not what !" I might just as well say the same thing regarding you, that I love you better then anything else : but don't you believe what I say. Yet I am not telling you a lie ; I neither confess nor deny being in love with you, I do not commit myself either way. I am very much grieved for Hero.

Bene. I swear by the sword (*i.e.*, by the cross, the hilt forming with the handle a cross) that you love me.

Beat. Do not swear oaths too hastily and then eat your words *i.e.*, go back upon them.

Bene. I vow by my sword that you do love me and I will make him eat it, that says that I do not return your love.

Beat. Are you sure that you will not recant your word ?

Bene. Never, under no inducement whatsoever. I declare once more that I love you dearly.

Beat. Then may God grant me pardon !

Bene. Pardon for what offence, dear Beatrice ?

Beat. You have stopped me at a fortunate moment : I was about to make a confession of my love for you.

Bene. Then do it freely and unreservedly with all your heart.

Beat. I love you with so much of my heart that none is left to protest.

Bene. Come, bid me do anything for thee.

Beat. Kill Claudio.

Bene. Ha, not for the wide world.

Beat. You kill me to *deny it*,[1] farewell.

Bene. Tarry, sweet Beatrice.

Beat. I am gone, though I am here, there is no love in you, nay, I pray you, let me go. 290

Bene. Beatrice.

Beat. In faith I will go.

Bene. We'll be friends first.

Beat. You dare easier be friends with me than fight with mine enemy.

Bene. Is Claudio thine enemy ?

Beat. Is he not *approved*[2] in the *height*[3] a villain, that hath slandered, scorned, dishonoured my kinswoman ? O that I were a man ! What, bear her in hand until they come to *take hands*[4] : and then, with public accusation, *uncovered*[5] slander, unmitigated rancour ? O God that I were a man ! I would eat his heart in the marketplace. 302

Bene. Hear me Beatrice.

Beat. Talk with a man out at a window. A *proper*[6] saying !

Bene. Nay but Beatrice.

Beat. Sweet Hero, She is wrong'd, she is slandered, she is undone.

Bene. Beat— 308

Beat. Princes and *counties* ![7] Surely, a princely testimony, a goodly count, *Count Confect*[8] ; a sweet gallant, surely ! O that I were a man for his sake ! or that I had any friend would be a man for my sake ! But manhood is melted into *curtesies*,[9] valour into compliment, and men are only turned into tangue, and *trim*[4] ones too : he is now as valiant as Hercules that only tells a lie and swears it.I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore, I will die a woman with grieving.

Bene. Tarry, good Beatrice, by *this hand*,[10] I love thee.

1. By refusing.
2. Proved.
3. In the highest degree.
4. Be married.
5. Open, public.
6. (Sarcastic) Fine, absurd.
7. Counts.
8. Lord Lollipop, a sugar- plum count.
9. Mere formalities, formal bows &courtesies.
4. Fine-spoken, sweet but empty nothings.
10. His own hand.

Beat. My heart is so full of love that there is no room for words.

Bene. Command me to do anything and it is done.

Beat. Then kill count Claudio.

Bene. No, I could not do it even for the whole world.

Beat. You kill me by refusing to kill Claudio. Good-bye.

Bene. Wait, dear Beatrice.

Beat. I am physically detained by you, but my spirit is gone already. My heart is no longer yours. You have never loved me. Let me go.

Bene. But, Beatrice,

Beat. I will not stay.

Bene. Let us make it up before you go.

Beat. It suits you better to be friends with me than fight my foes.

Bene. Is Claudio your foe ?

Beat. Has he not been proved a scoundrel in the highest degree ? He has spread malicious lies, help up to scorn and utterly disgraced my cousin : oh, I wish I were a man to punish him myself. Fancy deceiving her into thinking till the very moment of the marriage that everything was all right and then accusing her openly, libellously and maliciously,—O Heaven ! if I were only a man, I would kill him and then eat his heart in public.

Bene. Oh, do listen for a moment, Beatrice—

Beat. The very idea that she talked with a lover at her bed-room window ! How absurd !

Bene, Do please listen, Beatrice,—

Beat. My dear cousin is disgraced, calumniated, utterly ruined.

Bene. Beatrice !

Beat. Princes and Counts, indeed ! Fine fellows these, Noble behaviour for sooth ! An excellent charge (or yarn fictitious story) ! My count candy or sugar-plum, 'my Lord Lollipop, ; truly a most chivalrous gentleman ! I wish I were a man if only to fight my noble lord or that I had a friend man enough to fight him for me ! But alas ! manliness is now reduced only to mere formal bows and courtesies, courage only to sweet but formal flattery, and men have become mere talkers and smooth ones at that ! A man has only to boast and swear and he is accounted as brave as Hercules in these days ! As I cannot be a man merely by wishing, however strongly, the only thing left to me is to prove that I am a woman by dying of grief.

Bene, Stay, sweet one. I swear by my right hand that I love you.

Beat. Use it for my love some other way than swearing by it.

Bene. Think you in your soul the Count Claudio hath wrong'd Hero?

Beat. Yea, as sure as I have a thought, or a soul.

Bene. Enough, I am *engag'd*;[1] I will challenge him, I will kiss your hand, and so I leave you. By *this hand*[2], Claudio shall render me a *dear*[3] account as : you hear of of me. so think of me. Go, comfort your cousin : I must *say*[4] she is dead : and so, farewell. [*Exeunt*.

Scene II. *A Prison in gowns*

Enter **Dogbery, Verges and Serton**

and The **Watch, Conrad** *with and* **Borachio.**

Dog. Is our whole *dissembly*[5] appear'd?

Vege. O, a stool and a cushion for the sexton.

Sex. Which be the *malefactors*?[6]

Dog. Marry, that am I and my partner.

Verg. Nay, that's certain, we have the *exhibition*[7] to examine.

Sex. But which are the offenders, that are to be examined? let them come before master constable.

Dog. Yea marry, let them come before me. What is your name, friend?

Bora. Borachio.

Dog. Pray write down Borachio. Yours sirrah?

Con. I am a gentlemen, sir, and my name is Conrade.

Dog. Write down, master gentlemen Conrade. Masters, do you serve God?

Con. } Yea, sir, we hope.
Bora. }

Dog. Write down, that they hope they serve God; and write God first; for God *defend*[8] but God should go before such villains: Masters, it is proved already that you are little better than false knaves, and it will go near to be thought so shortly, how answer you for yourselves?

Con. Marry sir, we say, we are none.

1. Pledged to fight.
2. Her hand.
3. Heavy.
4. Pretend.
5. Assembly.
6. Prisoners
7. Examination
8. Forbid.

Beat. To win my heart you must make some other use of your right hand than that of merely swearing by it.

Bene. Are you really convinced that Claudio has falsely accused Hero ?

Beat. Yes, as absolutely as I am convinced that I have a mind or a soul.

Bene. That will do, as far as I am concerned ; I am pledged to fight Claudio. I will kiss your hand and go, I swear by your sweet hand that I will exact a heavy penalty from Claudio. Judge me henceforth by what account I give of myself, how I fulfil my vow. So go and cheer up Hero now : I must pretend that Hero is dead : Good-bye, dear Beatrice. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II, *A Prison*

Enter the Constables *and* the Town Clerk in gowns with the Watch, Conrad *and* Borachio,

Dog. Is the whole assembly present ?

Verg. Bring a comfortable seat for the Sexton (who acts as a sort of president).

Sex. Who are the offenders ?

Dog. My comrade Verges and I, sir.

Verg. Yes, to be sure : we have to examine the accused and to make an official report of our examination.

Sex. But where are the offenders ? Produce them before the constable.

Dog. Yes, let present them before me. What is your name, sir ?

Bora. Borachio.

Dog. Make a note of it. And what is yours, fellow ?

Con. I am no 'fellow', sir, but a gentleman. My name is Conrade.

Dog. Put it down. Sirs, are you both servants of God ?

Con.
Bora. } We believe so, sir.

Dog. Make a note that they believe that they are servants of God and take care that you put the name of God first ; God forbid that such rogues' names should go before His ! Sirs, it is conclusively proved that you are treacherous villains ; and before long we shall begin to think the name of you, What have you got to say to this ?

Con. We are nothing of the sort, sir.

Dog. A *marvellous*[1] witty fellow, I assure you, but I will *go about with him*:[2] Come you hither sirrah, a word in your ear sir, I say to you, it is thought you are false knaves.

Bora. Sir, I say to you, we are none.

Dog. Well, stand aside. 'Fore God, they *are both in tale* :[3] have you writ down, that they are none ?

Sex. Master constable, you go not the way to examine : you must call forth the watch that are their accusers.

Dog. Yea marry, that's the *eftest*[4] way, Let the watch come forth. Masters, I charge you, in the prince's name, accuse these men.

First Watch. This man said, sir that Don John, the prince's brother, was a villain.

Dog. Write down Prince John a villain. Why, this is *flat perjury*,[5] to call a prince's brother villain.

Bora. Master constable,—

Dog. Pray thee, fellow, peace: I do not like thy look, I *promise*[6] thee.

Sex. What heard you him say else ?

Sec. Watch. Marry, that he had received a thousand ducats of Don John for accusing the Lady Hero wrongfully.

Dog. Flat *burglary*[7] as ever was committed.

Verg. Yea, by mass, that it is.

Sex. What else, fellow ?

First Watch. And that Count Claudio did mean, *upon his words*,[8] to disgrace before the whole assembly, and not marry her.

Dog. O villain ! thou wilt be condemned into everlasting *redemption*[9] for this.

Sex. What else ?

Watch. This is all.

Sex. And this is more, master, than you can deny. Prince John is this morning secretly stolen away ; Hero was in this manner accused, in this very manner *refused*,[10] and upon the grief of this suddenly died. Master

1. Wonderfully, surpassingly,
2. Get round, circumvent.
3. They tell the same story.
4. Quickest' best, perhaps an error for deftest.
5. Downright treason.
6. Assure.
7. Conspiracy.
8. Borachio's charge.
9. Damnation.
10. Rejected

Dog. A wonderfully clever fellow, I am sure, but I will get round him yet. Come here, fellow ; a word for you in private : I tell you that you are both considered to be traitorous rogues.

Bora. I tell you, sir, we are not.

Dog. I say that is enough for the present. But God ! both tell the same story. Have you taken down that they are no villains ?

Sex. But, good constable, that is not the way to conduct an examination : must summon the watchmen who accused these two.

Dog. Right, that is the quickest way. Let the watchmen appear before me. Sirs, I call upon you in the name of the Prince to state your charges against these fellows.

First. Watch. The first accused said that Don John was a rogue.

Dog. Make a note of the fact that Don John is a rogue. It is high treason to say that the Prince's brother is a rogue,

Bora. Sir,—

Dog. Silence, man ; I do not like your face, I assure you.

Sex. What else did you hear the accused say ?

Sec. Watch. He said that Don John had paid him one thousand ducats to bring a false charge against the Lady Hero.

Dog. An open conspiracy as ever was heard of.

Verg. Yes, by the mass, you are right.

Sex. Anything else ?

First Watch. Yes, he also said that Count Claudio, upon his accusation, intended to denounce the Lady Hero before the whole gathering in the church and refuse to marry her.

Dog. Oh, scoundrel ! you will be sentenced to eternal damnation for this.

Sex. Anything more ?

Watch. That is all that we heard.

Sex. You cannot deny all this. Don John has this very morning fled from Messina, and everything has happened according to their dictates. Hero who has been accused, rejected and she has suddenly died of a broken heart. Master constable, bring these

Constable, let these men be bound, and brought to Leonato's : I will go before and show him their examination. [*Exit.*

Dog. Come, let them be *opinioned.*[1]

Verg. Let them be in the hands—

Con. Off, coxcomb !

Dog. God's my life, where's the sexton ? let him write down the prince's officer coxcomb. Come, bind them. Thou *nuughty varlet !*[2]

Con. Away ! you are an ass, you are an ass.

Dog. Dost thou not *suspect*[3] my place ! dost thou not suspect my years ? O that he were here to write me down an ass ! But, masters, remember that I am an ass ; though it be not written down, yet forget not that I am an ass. No, thou villain, thou art full of *piety*,[4] as shall be proved upon thee by good witness. I am a wise fellow, and, which is more, an officer, and, which is more, a householder, and which is more, as *pretty a piece of flesh*[5] as any is in Messina, and one that knows the law, go to ; and a rich fellow enough, *go to*,[5] and a fellow that hath had losses, and one that hath two gowns and every thing handsome about him. Bring him away. O that I had been writ down as ass ! [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

Scene I *Before* Leonato's *house.*

Enter Leonato *and* Antonio.

Ant. If you go on thus, you will kill yourself :
And 'tis not wisdom thus to *second*[7] grief
Against yourself.

Leon. I pray thee, cease thy counsel.
Which falls into mine ears as profitless
As water in a sieve : give not me counsel ;
Nor let no comforter delight mine ear
But such a one whose wrongs do *suit*[8] with mine.
Bring me a father that so loved his child,
Whose joy *of her*[9] is overwhelm'd like mine,
And bid him speak of patience ;
Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine

1 Pinioned, handcuffed.

2. Good-for-nothing rogue.

3. Respect.

4. Impiety.

5. As fine a fellow.

6. You know.

7. Assist, help.

8. Agree.

9. In her.

fellows in chains before Signior Leonato. I will go first and submit to him the report of our enquiry. [*Exit.*

Dog. Now, these fellows must be pinioned.

Verg. Yes, let them be handcuffed.

Con. Hands off, you clown !

Dog. Heavens alive ! where is the sexton ? Let him make a note that I, the prince's constable, am a clown. Handcuff them. Oh, you rascal !

Con. Shut up, you donkey !

Dog. Have you no regard for my office or my age ? Oh, how I wish that the sexton were present to record that I am a donkey ! But sirs, I ask you all to remember that I am called a donkey, though it may not be on record. You meanfellow, it will be clearly established with the help of reliable witnesses that you are full of all manner of wickedness. You know that I am a clever man and, what is more important, a state official and what is even more important, a citizen of this city and what is the most important, as fine a fellow as any one in Messina, and one learned in law ; a wealthy man too, one who had seen better days and can still boast of plenty of fine clothes and of everything. Bring the prisoners along. I only wish that it might have been noted that I am a donkey ! [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

Scene 1. Before Leonato's House

Enter **Leonato** *and* **Antonio.**

Ant. If you go on nursing your grief like this, it will be your death ; it is folly to help your grief in killing yourself like this.

Leon. Stop, I beg you, giving me your unsolicited advice which is pouring into my unheeding ears as water pours into a sieve through which it escapes : pray, spare me from your advice. It is useless for any one to offer me consolation except one whose sorrows are similar to mine. If you can find a father who loved his daughter as dearly as I and whose delight in her has been lost in grief as great as mine, I shall learn lessons of patience from him. Compare his grief with mine in magnitude and see whether exactly it resembles

And let it answer every *strain*[1] for strain
As thus for thus and such a grief for such,
In every *lieneament*,[2] branch, shape, and form :
If such a one will smile and stroke his beard,
Bid sorrow wag, cry 'hem !' when he should groan,
Patch grief with proverbs ; make misfortune drunk
With *candle-waster*[3] ; bring him *yet*[4] to me,
And I of him will gather patience.
But there is no such man : for, brother, men
Can counsel and speak comfort to that grief
Which they themselves not feel, but tasting it,
Their counsel turns to *passion*,[5] which before
Would give *preceptial medicine*[6] to rage,
Fetter strong madness in a silken thread.
Charm ache with *air*[7] and agony with words :
No, no ; 'tis all men's office to speak patience
To those that *wring*[8] under the load of sorrow,
But no man's virtue nor *sufficiency*[9]
Te be so *moral*[10] when he shall endure
The like himself. Therefore give me no counsel :
My griefs cry louder than *advertisement*.[11]

Ant. Therein do men from children nothing differ.

Leon. I pray thee, peace. I will be flesh and blood ;
For there was never yet philosopher
That could endure the toothache patiently,
However *they*[12] have writ the style of gods
And *made a push at*[13] chance and *sufferance*.[14]

Ant. Yet bend not all the harm upon yourself ;
Make those that do offend you suffer too.

Leon. There thou speak'st reason ; nay, I will do so.
My soul doth tell me Hero is belied ;
And that shall Claudio know ; so shall the prince
And all of them that thus dishonour her.

Ant. Here comes the prince and Claudio hastily.

Enter **Don Pedro** *and* **Claudio**.

D. Pedro. Good den, good den.

Claud. Good day to both of you.

Leon. Hear you, my lords,—

1. (1) Feeling. (2) Tense racking.
2. Feature, shape.
3. Scholars, book-worms.
4. Even now.
5. Violent feeling, strong emotion.
6. Moral precepts, wise sayings.
7. Mere breath.
8. Writhe.
9. Power, strength.
10. Full of moralising.
11. Moral instruction, counsel.
12. He.
13. (1) Spurned in contempt (2) Defied.
14. Suffering

mine in all points, pang for pang, in kind, degree, and feature, and then if you find that he keeps cheerful in spite of grief, smiling and stroking his beard like a philosophic pedant, commands sorrow to go away, clears the throat preparatory to a platitudinous speech instead of indulging in grief, solaces his sorrow with maxims and aphorisms and drowns care in the sententious wisdom of scholars, the burners of the midnight oil, then I am prepared to learn patience from him. But you could not find such a man, for there is none such. My dear brother, people can offer advice and consolation for other men's grief which they themselves do not feel ; but when they themselves come to experience the sorrow, all their reason turns into acute feeling, their wisdom into strong emotion and all their sayings and maxims with which they would heal passion as with medicine, check and restrain madness as with threads of silk, are forgotten in the intesity of their personal grief. No, Antonio, it is all men's occupation as well as duty to counsel patience to those who torment under a crushing burden of grief but it is in no one's moral power or ability to remember his own moralising when he is himself the sufferer. So do not try to offer me any advice. My grief is too great to be calmed by admonition or moral instruction.

Ant. If it be so, men are no better than children.

Leon. Leave me alone, I beg you, I want to be quite human and natural, and even the greatest of philosaphers, with whatever air of loftiness they may pretend to be god-like in their strength and to be superior to all human weaknesses and to despise misfortune and pain, cannot bear without complaint when they actually come to suffer, even the tooth-ache, not to speak of the other ills flesh is heir to.

Ant. But why to suffer all the evil consequences of the wrong all alone ? Make the wrong-doers come in for a share of the suffering also.

Leon. Now you are talking sense and I will act upon it. I feel certain in my heart that Hero is wronged and I will be avenged on all those who have disgraced her.

Ant.. Don Pedro and Claudio are coming this way in a hurry.

Enter **Don Pedro** *and* **Claudio**

D. Pedro. Good even.

Cluad. God day, sirs.

Leon. Listen to me please.

D. Pedro. We have some haste, Leonato,

Leon. Some haste, my lord! well, fare you well, my lord:
Are you so *hasty*[1] now? well *all is one.*[1]

D. Pedro. Nay, do not quarrel with us, good old man.

Ant. If he could right himself with quarreling,
Some of us would lie low.

Claud. Who wrongs him?

Leon. Marry, thou dost wrong me; thou *dissembler*,[2] thou:—
Nay, never lay thy hand upon thy sword;
I fear thee not.

Claud. Marry, *besherw*[3] my hand,
If it should give your age such cause of fear:
In faith, my hand mean nothing to my sword.

Leon. Tush, tush, man; never *fleer*[4] and jest at me:
I speak not like a *dotard*[5] nor a fool,
As under privilege of age to brag.
What I have done being young, or what would do
Were I not old. Know, Claudio, to thy head,
Thou hast so wrong'd mine innocent child and me
That I am forced to lay my *reverence*[6] by
And, with grey hairs and *bruise*[7] of many days,
Do challenge thee to *trial of a man*[8].
I say thou hast belied mine innocent child:
Thy slander hath gone through and through her heart,
And she lies buried with her ancestors;
O, in a tomb where never scandal slept,
Save this of hers, *framed*[9] by thy villany!

Claud. My villany?

Leon. Thine, Claudio; thine, I say.

D. Pedro. You say not right, old man

Leon. My lord, my lord.
I'll prove it on his body if he dare,
Despite his *nice fence*[10] and his active practice,
His May of youth and bloom of *lustihood*[11].

Claud. Away! I will not have to do with you.

1. In a hurry, anxious to get away.
2. It makes no difference, it does not matter.
3. Hypocrite.
4. A curse -confound.
5. Sneer, grin.
6. A foolish old man.
7. Privilege of old age.
8. Betterings of time
9. Personal combat.
10. Contrived,
11. Skill as a fencer.
2. Vigour.

D. Pedro. We are in a hurry, Leonato.

Leon. In a hurry, my Lord? All right, sir. Are you, who proposed to stop here a month, so anxious to get away now? But it makes no difference.

D. Pedro. Let us not wrangle, Signior.

Ant. If quarreling could set matters right and undo the mischief done, some people would have been slain by this time.

Claud. Who has done him any injury?

Leon. It is yourself, you hypocrite! Don't you dream of intimidating me by grasping your sword. I am not afraid of you.

Claud. Confound my hand if it has really given you, an old man, an occasion for fright: believe me I did not mean it.

Leon. Nonsense! Do not grin at and make fun of me, for I am not talking as if I were taking advantage of my old age to boast of what I have done in my youth and what I should do now if it were not for my age. I say it clearly and boldly in your face that you have done such a grievous injury to my innocent daughter and myself that I am driven to forget that I am a reverend old man and, worn and battered by time as I am I challenge you to try your manhood against mine in a single combat. I say in your face again that you have falsely accused my pure inoffensive daughter. Your calumnies have broken her heart and she now lies buried in the family vault where lies no one dishonoured by scandal except herself, the innocent victim of a villainous plot!

Claud. My villainous plot?

Leon. Yes, yours.

D. Pedro. That is anything but true, old Leonato.

Leon. My lord, if he is not afraid to meet me. I will establish the truth of my statement in single combat in spite of his skill in fencing, his constant practice, his life's prime and his youthful vigour.

Claud. Begone! I will never fight you.

Leon. Canst thou so *daff*[1] me? Thou hast kill'd my child:
If thou kill'st me, boy, thou shalt kill a man.
Ant. He shall kill two of us, and men indeed:
But that's no matter; let him kill one first;
Win me and wear me; let him *answer*[2] me.
Come, follow me, boy; come, sir boy, come, follow me:
Sir boy, I'll whip you from your *foining*[3] fence;
Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will.
Leon. Brother,—
Ant. *Content*[4] yourself. God knows I loved my niece:
And she is dead, slander'd to death by villains
That dare as well answer a man indeed
As I dare take a serpent by the tongue:
Boys, apes, *braggarts*,[5] *Jacks*[6], *milksops*[7]!
Leon. Brother Antony,—
Ant. Hold you content. What, man! I know them, yea,
And what they weigh, even to the utmost scruple,
Scambling,[8] *out-facing*[9], *fashion monging*[10] boys,
That lie and *cog*[11] and flout, deprave and slander,
Go *anticly*,[12] show outward hideousness,
And speak off half a dozen *dangerous*[13] words,
How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst;
And this is all.
Leon. But, brother Antony,—
Ant. Come, 'tis no matter;
Do not you meddle; let me deal in this,
D. Pedro. Gentlemen both, we will not *wake*[14] your patience,
My heart is sorry for your daughter's death;
But, on my honour, she was charged with nothing
But what was true and very *full of proof*.[15]
Leon. My lord, my lord,—
D. Pedro. I will not hear you.
Leon. No? Come, brother; away! I will be heard.
Ant. And shall, or some of us will smart for it.
[*Exeunt Leonato and Antonio.*
D. Pedro. See, see; here comes the man we went to seek.

1. Put off
2. Meet in combat.
3. Thrusting (fencing term).
4. Restrain yourself, calm yourself.
5. Boasters.
6. Rogues.
7. Weak men.
8. Squabbling.
9. Swaggering
10. Foppish'
11. Cheat.
12. Go about like buffoons.
13. Threatening.
14. Disturb, try.
15. Fully proved.

Leon. You cannot put me off so easily. You have killed my daughter. My boy, by killing me you will kill a man.

Ant. He will now have to kill two men, you and I, two real men not boys like himself. But it does not matter. Let him fight me first and by killing me exult in his victory if he can ; let him meet me first. Come along, may lad : I will thrash you out of your dexterous thrusts in fencing as surely as I am a gentleman ; take my word for it.

Leon. My dear Antonio—

Ant. Pray remain quiet. Heaven alone knows how dearly I loved Hero. She has been killed by the calumnies of the knaves who have no more courage to fight a man worth the name than I have to sieze a venomous reptile by the tongue. They are mere children, monkeys, boasters, rascals, effeminate weaklings—utterly beneath contempt !

Leon. But my dear brother,—

Ant. Keep quiet please. I know these mean sort and I have seized them up very precisely—squabbling, shuffling, swaggering foppish boys that go about dressed like buffoons, lying, cheating, mocking, traducing and calumniating people. These fellows, though cowards at heart, put on martial airs, rattle out a couple of threatening words as to how they might kill their foes if only they had the courage to do so. But this is all imagenary blast which never comes to reality.

Leon. But dear brother,—

Ant. I say, you don't worry about it. I will pay him in his own coins you need not interfere.

D. Pedro, Signiors, we will not further tax your patience by staying longer here. I am genuinely grieved at the death of Hero. But upon my word as a gentleman, we had clear proof of the offence she was accused of.

Leon. But, my dear sir,—

D. Pedro. I will not listen to you.

Leon. Wont't you ? Let us go, Antonio, I will make him listen.

Ant. That you shall or some one will suffer for it.

[*Exeunt Leonato and Antonio*].

D. Pedro. Look ! here is the very man we were looking for.

Enter **Benedick.**

Claud. Now, signior, what news ?

Bene. Good day, my lord.

D. Pedro. Welcome, signior : you are almost come to part almost a *fray*[1].

Claud. We had like to have had our two noses snapped off with two old men without teeth.

D. Pedro. Leonato and his brother. What thinkest thou ? Had we fought, I *doubt*[2] we should have been too young for them.

Bene. In a *false quarrel*[3] there is no true valour. I came to seek you both.

Claud. We have been up and down to seek thee ; for we are *high-proof melancholy*[4] and would *fain*[5] have it beaten away. Wilt thou use thy wit ?

Bene. It is in my scabbard : shall I draw it ?

D. Pedro. Dost thou wear thy wit by thy side ?

Claud. Never any did so, though very many have been beside their wit. I will bid thee draw, as we do the minstrels ; draw, to pleasure us.

D. Pedro. As I am an honest man, he looks pale. Art thou sick, or angry ?

Claud. What, courage, man ! What though care killed a cat, thou hast *mettle*[6] enough in thee to kill care.

Bene, Sir, I shall meet your wit *in the career*,[7] an you charge it against me. I pray you choose another subject.

Claud. Nay, then, give him another *staff*[8] : this last was broke cross.

D. Pedro. By this light, he changes more and more ; I think he be angry indeed.

Claud. If he be, he knows how to turn his girdle

Bene. Shall I speak a word in your ear ?

Claud. God *bless*[9] me from a challenge !

Bene. [*Aside to Claudio*] You are a villain ;

I jest not : I will make it good how you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare. *Do me right*,[10] or I will

1. A fight, a duel.
2. Suppose, think .
3. Unjust quarrel.
4. Sad in the highest degree.
5. Gladly, willingly.
6. Spirit.
7. In full tilt, in full charge.
8. Lance;
9. Save
10. Accept my challenge.

Enter **Benedick.**

Claud. Well, sir, how goes the world ?

Bene. Good day to you, Prince.

D. Pedro. I am glad you have come. You were almost in time to prevent what was going to be a fight.

Claud. Yes, we were likely to have had our noses bitten off by two toothless old men.

D. Pedro. Leonato and his brother Antonio ! What do you make of it ? I fancy if it had come to a fight we would have proved too strong on account of our youth for them.

Bene. It requires no true courage to fight in a wrong cause. I was looking for both of you.

Claud. We have been searching for you everywhere. We are depressed in the highest degree and we want you to drive away our depression. Will you not cheer us up with your wit ?

Bene. It is in the sheath of my sword. Shall I bring it out and use it on you ?

D. Pedro. Do you keep your wit hanging by your side ?

Claud. I have never heard of anybody doing it, though many a man has been out of his wits. As we ask fiddlers to draw their bows across their fiddles or their instruments from their cases, so I ask you to draw your wit from its sheath for our entertainment.

D. Pedro. Upon my honour, he is very pale. Is it illness or anger that makes you pale, Benedick ?

Claud. Buck up, my dear fellow ! Though the cat in the adage died of care, yet you have spirit enough in you to kill care rather than let care kill you.

Bene. If you level your wit at me for a charge, I will encounter it in full tilt. Please change the subject of your talk.

Claud. Give him another lance—shaft, for on account of his bad tilting his last one is snapped in the middle (*i.e.*, give him some other subject of talk, for in the last one he did not do well).

D. Pedro. By God's light, he is changing colour very much : I am sure he is deeply offended.

Claud. Well, if he is angry, let him turn the buckle of his gridle behind him *i.e.*, offer a challange.

Bene. I have a private message for you.

Claud. Heaven save me from a fight.

Bene. [Aside to Claudio] you are a rascal ; no, I am not joking, I am quite serious ; I will prove it up to the hilt in single combat,

protest your cowardice. You have killed a sweet lady, and her death shall fall heavy on you. Let me hear from you.

Claud. Well, I will meet you, so I may have good *cheer*.[1]

D. Pedro, What, a feast, a feast ?

Claud. I' faith, I thank him ; he hath bid me to a calf's head and a capon : the which if I do not carve most *curiously*,[2] say my knife's *naught*.[3] Shall I not find a woodcock too ?

Bene. Sir, your wit *ambles*[4] well ; it goes easily.

D. Pedro. I'll tell thee how Beatrice *praised*[5] thy wit the other day. I said, thou hadst a fine wit : 'True,' said she, 'a fine little one.' 'No,' said I, 'a great wit ;' 'Right,' says she, 'a great *gross*[6] one.' Nay,' said I, 'a good wit :' '*Just*,'[7] said she, 'it hurts nobody.' 'Nay,' said I, 'the gentleman is wise. ' 'Certainly,' said she, 'a wise gentleman.' 'Nay,' said I, 'he hath the tongues. ' 'That I believe,' said she, 'for he swore a thing to me on Monday night, which he for-swore on Tuesday morning ; there's a double tongue ; there's two tongues.' Thus did she, an hour together, *trans-shape*[8] thy particular virtues : yes at last she concluded with a sigh, thou wast the *properest*[9] man in Italy.

Claud. For the which she wept heartily and said she cared not.

D. Pedro. Yea, that she did ; but yet, for all that, and if she did not hate him *deadly*,[10] she would love him dearly : the old man's daughter told us all.

Claud. All, all : and, moreover, God *saw him*[11] when he was hid in the garden.

D. Pedro. But when shall we set the savage bull's horns on the sensible Benedick's head ?

Claud. Yea, and text underneath, 'Here dwells Benedick the married man '?

Bene. Fare you well, boy, you know my mind. I will leave you now to your *gossip-like*[12] humour: you break jests as braggarts do their blades, which, God be thanked,

1. Incouragement.
2. Skilfully.
3. Useless.
4. Moves at an easy pace.
5. Appraised
6. Coarse,
7. Exactly.
8. Transform, distort.
9. Handsomest?
10. Mortally
11. Ref. to Genesis, iii. 8.
12. Gossiping, light,

leaving to you the choice of weapon, place and time. Give me proper satisfaction or I will proclaim in public that you are a coward, You have caused the death of an innocent maiden and you shall pay dearly for it. I demand an answer.

Claud. All right, I will come, provided you give me good entertainment.

D. Pedro. Well, are you arranging a feast ?

Claud. I am very much beholden to him for asking me to a dinner in which I shall have to carve a calf's head and a capon (two terms of contempt signifying stupidity applied to Benedick). If I do not prove an excellent carver, it will be due only to the bluntness of the knife. May I not expect a woodcock (type of stupidity) too among the dishes ?

Bene. Your wit moves at an easy pace : it goes very smoothly.

D. Pedro. You should know in what terms Beatrice spoke of your wit only recently. I said you had a fine wit. She replied, 'yes, you are right : it is so fine as to be very thin, almost indistinguishable'. 'Oh no", I protested "his wit is really great". "True, I agree" she said, 'it is heavy and coarse". I replied then that it was not coarse but good. "Exactly so', she retorted, 'it is very good, so good as to be absolutely inoffensive'. To my observation that you are wise she replied, 'yes a wiseacre.' When I said that you could talk several languages, she replied that she perfectly agreed with me, with two tongues. In this strain she distorted all your good qualities ; but in the end she admitted that you were the most hand-some man in the country.

Claud. Then she cried very bitterly and said that she did not care for you.

D. Pedro. Yes, she did say that : also that she would love you deeply if she did not feel mortal hatred for you ; Leonato's daughter, Hero, told us everything about it.

Claud. Yes, everything : was he not also seen hiding in the garden like Adam and Eve ?

D. Pedro. But I am anxious to see Benedick married and deceived.

Claud. And bearing the following legend, 'Here lives Benedick the husband'.

Bene. I must take leave of you for the present, my lad : you understand what I meant. You may now go on with your senseless chatter.You crack jokes like boastful fellows who break their swords in brawls in which no one is hurt. Prince, I express my thankfulness

hurt not. My lord, for your many courtesies I thank you; I must discontinue your company: your brother the bastard is fled from Messina: you have among you killed a sweet and innocent lady. For my *Lord Lackbeard*[1] there, he and I shall meet: and, till then, peace be with him. [*Exit.*

D. Pedro. He is in earnest.

Claud. In most profound earnest; and, I'll warrant you, for the love of Beatrice.

D. Pedro. And hath challenged thee.

Claud. Most sincerely.

D. Pedro. What a pretty thing man is when he goes in his doublet and hose and leaves off his wit!

Claud. He is then a giant to an ape: but then is an ape a doctor to such a man.

D. Pedro. But, *soft you*,[2] let me be: pluck up, my heart, and be *sad*.[3] Did he not say my brother was fled?

Enter Dogberry, Verges, *and the* Watch, *with* Conrade *and* Borachio.

Dog. Come you, sir: if justice cannot tame you, she shall ne'er weigh more reasons in her balance: nay, an you be a cursing hypocrite *once*,[4] you must be looked to.

D. Pedro. How now? two of my brother's men bound: Borachio one!

Claud. *Hearken after*[5] their offence, my lord.

D. Pedro. Officers, what offence have these men done?

Dog. Marry, sir, they have committed *false report*[6]; moreover, they have spoken untruths; *secondarily*,[7] they are *slanders*,[8] sixth and lastly, they have belied a lady; thirdly, they have *verified*[9] unjust things; and, to conclude they are lying knaves.

D. Pedro. First, I ask thee what they have done; thirdly, I ask thee what's their offence; sixth and lastly, why they are committed; and, to conclude, what you lay to their charge.

1. Bearbless Claudio.
2. Gently.
3. Serious.
4. At any time.
5. Pay head to,
6. Perjury.
7. Secondly.
8. Slanderers.
9. Testified.

to you for your former acts of kindness ; but our friendship must now cease, for you and your bastard brother, Don John, who has run away from the city, have caused the death of a lovely and harmless girl. As for my Lord Beardless there, he and I will soon meet in single combat : until then, farewell : [*Exit*

D. Pedro. I am sure, he is serious.

Claud. Yes, he is and, I assure you, it is because of his love for Beatrice.

D. Pedro. And he has challenged you to a fight ?

Claud. Yes, and in all seriousness too.

D. Pedro. (1) "What an inconsistent fool is he, when he covers his body with clothes and at the same time divests himself of his understanding." (2) "What a pretty thing a man is, when he is silly enough to throw off his cloak, and go in his doublet and hose, to fight for a woman."

Claud. When stripped of his wit "he is then as much inferior to an ape in sense as he is supperior in stature."

D. Pedro. But wait a moment, Let me prepare myself for serious business. Were we not told by him that Don John had fled from Messina ?

Enter **Dogberry, Verges,** *and the* **Watch,** *with* **Conrade** *and* **Borachio.**

Dog. Now, fellow, if the law cannot bring you to your senses, then it should cease to function and should no longer try to dispense justice. If you are an accursed slanderer at any time, as you were just now at the prison you will have to be properly dealt with.

D. Pedro. What means this ? Two of Don John's followers, one of them Borachio, in chains !

Claud. Let us carefully hear what they are accused of.

D. Pedro. I say, constable, what is the case against these fellows ?

Dog. Well, sir, they have committeh perjury ; they have told lies ; secondly they are slanderers ; sildtxy and lastly they have falsely accused a lady ; thirdly they have testified to false statements and to sum up, they are wicked liars.

D. Pedro. Then in the same order as you have stated, let me ask you first what is your charge against them ; thirdly [illegible] what they have done ; sixthly and lastly why they are arrest[illegible] to sum up, what is your blame against them.

Claud. Rightly *reasoned*[1] and in his own *division*;[2] and, by my troth, there's one meaning well suited.

D. Pedro. Who have you offended, masters, that you are thus bound to your answer? this learned constable is too *cunning*[3] to be understood; what's your offence?

Bora. Sweet prince, let me go no farther to mine answer: do you hear me, and let this count kill me. I have deceived even your very eyes: what your wisdoms could not discover, these shallow fools have brought to light: who in the night overheard me confessing to this man how Don John your brother *incensed*[4] me to slander the Lady Hero, how you were brought into the orchard and saw me court Margaret in Hero's garments; how you disgraced her, when you should marry her: my villany, they have upon record; which I would rather *seal*[5] with my death than repeat over to my shame. The lady is dead *upon*[6] mine and my master's false accusation; and, briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villain.

D. Pedro. Runs not this speech like *iron*[7] through your blood?

Claud. I have drunk poison whiles he utter'd it.

D. Pedro. But did my brother set thee on to this?

Bora. Yea, and paid me richly for the *practice*[8] of it.

D. Pedro. He is composed and framed of treachery:
And fled he is upon his villany.

Claud. Sweet Hero! now thy image doth appear
In the rare semblance that I loved at first.

Dog. Come, bring away the *plaintiffs*;[9] by this time our sexton hath *reformed*[10] Signor Leonato of the matter; and, masters, do not forget to *specify*[11] when time and place shall serve, that I am an ass.

Verg. Here, here comes master Signior Leonato, and the sexton too.

Re-enter Leonato *and* Antonio, *with the* Sexton.

Leon. Which is the villain? let me see his eyes,
That, when I note another man like him,
I may avoid him: which of these is he?

to their. If you would know your wronger look on me.

1. Stated.
2. Arrangement.
3. Clever.
4. Incited.
5. Confirm, ratify.
6. In consequence of.
7. Sword thrust.
8. Performance.
9. Culprits.
10. Informed
11. Testify.

Claud. Correctly put and according to the man's own arrangement of the subject; and one thing said in four different forms.

D. Pedro. Have you done any injury to any one that you are made to take your trial before a court of justice? This constable is too learned and clever for me. What have you done?

Bora. My lord, I will confess straightaway: give me a hearing please and then let Count Claudio kill me if he likes. You have been tricked into seeing a wrong thing: these muddle-headed idiots have by chance discovered what you with all your cleverness would never have found out. They overheard me telling this man that your brother Don John incited me to accuse the Lady Hero, that we got you to watch in the garden while I made love to Margaret dressed up in Hero's clothes, that she was shamed by you publicly in the church at the very moment of her appointed marriage with the Count; they have already made a note of my confession and I would rather confirm it by my death than tell over again this tale of dishonour. The lady has died in consequence of the baseless scandal spread by my master and I would welcome the fittest punishment for my wickedness.

D. Pedro. Does not the story of Borachio pierce your body, like a sword, Claudio?

Claud. While I heard the confession, I felt as if I was drinking a cup of poison.

D. Pedro. But is it a fact that Don John incited you to commit this crime.

Bora. Yes, and he handsomely rewarded me for carrying out the plot.

D. Pedro. His nature is made up entirely of villainy. He has fled from the city after performing the crime.

Claud. Dear Hero, your vision comes back to me in all the pristine beauty and grace in which I first saw and loved her.

Dog. Remove the defendants now. By now Signior Leonato must have been informed of the crime by the Sexton. But, friends, I request you to testify at the proper time and place that I am a donkey.

Verg. Here they come, Signior Leonato and the Sexton.

Re-enter **Leonato** *and* **Antonio** *with the* **Sexton.**

Leon. Where is the scoundrel? Let me closely look into his eyes so that I may avoid another man looking like him. Who is that fellow?

Bora. I am the man who has done such a great injury.

Leon. Art thou the slave that with thy *breath*[1] hast kill'd
My innocent child ?

Bora. Yea, even I alone.

Leon. No, not so, villain ; thou beliest thyself :
Here stand a pair of honourable men ;
A third is fled, that had a hand in it.
I thank you, princes, for my daughter's death :
Record it with your high and worthy deeds :
'Twas bravely done, if you *bethink you of it.*[2]

Claud. I know not how to pray your patience ;
Yet I must speak. Choose your revenge yourself ;
Impose me to what *penance*[3] your *invention*[4]
Can lay upon my sin ; yet sinn'd I not
But in *mistaking.*[5]

D. Pedro. By my soul, nor I ;
And yet, to satisfy this good old man,
I would *bend*[6] under any heavy *weight*[7]
That he'll enjoin me to.

Leon. I cannot bid you bid my daughter live ;
That were impossible ; but, I pray you both,
Possess the people in Messina here
How innocent she died ; and if your love
Can *labour*[8] aught in sad *invention*,[9]
Hang her an *epitaph*[10] upon her tomb
And sing it to her bones, sing it to-night :
To-morrow morning come you to my house,
And since you could not be my son-in-law,
Be yet my nephew ; my brother hath a daughter,
Almost the copy of my child that's dead,
And she alone is heir to both of us :
Give her the right you should have given her cousin,
And so dies my revenge.

Claud. O noble sir,
Your over-kindness doth wring tears from me !
I do embrace your offer ; and *dispose*[11]
For henceforth *of*[12] poor Claudio.

1. Slanderous words.
2. Think over it.
3. Penalty, punishment.
4. Imagination.
5. Making a mistake through an error.
6. Bow down, submit to.
7. Punishment.
8. Work in the direction of.
9. Poetic skill.
10. Verses hung upon tombs.
11. Do whatever you like.
12. With

Leon. Are you the knave who has killed my spotless daughter with false statement ?

Bora. Yes, it is I and nobody else.

Leon. No, this is not correct, you rogue ; you are doing injustice to yourself. Here are the two, both men of honour, and there is a third one, a fugitive now, who has a large share in the deed. I am very much obliged to you, most noble gentlemen, for causing the death of my daughter, an innocent maiden ; reckon it among your heroic achievements, for if you think over the matter you will see how noble a feat it was.

Claud. I do not know how I can ask your indulgence but I can no longer hold my tongue. Demand any form of satisfaction from me and inflict on me any atonement for my sin that you can think of, even the most cruel, and I shall gladly make it. But my sin was not the result of premeditated malice, it is merely a criminal error.

D. Pedro. And, upon my honour, I too committed a grievous error. But I will give satisfaction to Leonato by bowing down to any grievous punishment that he will inflict upon me.

Leon. Revenge and punishment are absolutely powerless to bring my daughter back to life. That is impossible : but I earnestly request you both to inform the people throughout the city how absolutely pure and guiltless she was ; if the great love you cherished for her can inspire you to compose some mournful poetry, hang some memorial verse upon her grave and sing it solemnly to her mortal remains. Then on the morrow you come to my house and marry my niece since you could not marry my daughter. I have a niece, my brother's daughter, who is the very image of your beloved Hero and who is the sole heiress to our joint possession. I shall have ample satisfaction for my wrong, if you give her the place in the affections you have for Hero.

Claud. O worthy sir ! I am overpowered by your extreme kindness. I readily accept your offer, and henceforth I am yours to do whatever you like with me.

Leon. To-morrow then I will expect your coming ;
To-night I take my leave. This *naughty*[1] man
Shall face to face be brought to Margaret,
Who I believe was *pack'd*[2] in all this wrong,
Hired to it by your brother.

Bora. No, by my soul, she was not,
Nor knew not what she did when she spoke to me,
But always hath been *just*[3] and virtuous
In any thing that I do know *by*[4] her. 289

Dog. Moreover, sir, which indeed is not *under white and black*,[5] this *plaintiff*[6] here, the offender, did call me ass : I beseech you, let it be remembered in his punishment. And also, the watch heard them talk of one *Deformed*[7] : they say he wears a key in his ear and a lock hanging by it, and borrows money in God's name, the which he hath *used*[8] so long and never paid that now men grow hard-hearted and will lend nothing for God's sake ; pray you, examine him upon that point.

Leon. I thank thee for thy care and honest pains.

Dog. Your worship speaks like a most thankful and reverend youth ; and I praise God for you 301

Leon. There's for thy pains.

Dog. God save the foundation !

Leon, Go, I *discharge*[9] thee of thy prisoner, and I thank thee.

Dog. I leave an *arrant*[10] knave with your worship ; which I beseech your worship to correct yourself, for the example of others. God keep your worship ! I wish your worship well ; God restore you to health ! I humbly *give*[11] you leave to depart ; and if a merry meeting may be wished, God *prohibit*[12] it! Come, neighbour.

[*Exeunt Dogberry and Verges.*

Leon. Until to-morrow morning, lords. farewell. 312

Ant. Farewell, my lords : we *look for*[13] you to-morrow.

D. Pedro. We will not fail.

Claud. To-night I'll mourn with Hero.

Leon [*To the Watch*] Bring you these fellows on.
We'll talk with Margaret.
How her acquaintance grew with this *lewd*[14] fellow.

[*Exeunt, severally.*

1. Wicked.
2. Confederate, implicated.
3. Honest.
4. Concerning.
5. In writing.
6. Culprit.
7. Misshapen a malefactor.
8. Practised.
9. Release.
10. Downright, thorough, from 'errant' wandering.
11. Ask, beg
12. Grant.
13. Expect.
14. Wicked, base.

Leon. I shall expect you to-morrow morning. As for this scoundrel, he must be confronted with Margaret who, I suspect, was a party to this conspiracy as a hired confederate.

Bora. No, upon my honour, she is quite innocent. She did not know what she was doing when, dressed up as Hero, she talked with me at the window. She has been always honest and good as far as I know her.

Dog. Above all this, sir, this defendant. I mean the culprit, called me a donkey—a thing which has not been recorded. I pray you, sir, to remember this offence at the time of announcing the sentence. Also, the watchman overheard the rogues speaking of a comrade named Misshapen who may be recognised by the lock and key that he wears. The fellow gets money out of people by the use of pious words like a professional beggar and he has done this for such a long time that people will no longer give him money even in the name of God. Please crossexamine him on this point too.

Leon. I am grateful to you for your zealous interest in this matter and the trouble you have taken.

Dog. You speak like a most grateful and dignified young man and I thank God for creating men like you.

Leon. Here is some money as a small return for your trouble.

Dog. May God bless the generos !

Leon. You may go now ; I relieve you of this prisoner and take charge of him. I thank you again.

Dog. I leave you in charge of a downright scoundral and I hope your honour will award him a deterrant punishment for the public interest: May Heaven protect your Honour and keep you in good health I humbly beg your leave to go. I pray for a happy ending to all. Come Comrade Verges, let us go.

[*Exeunt* **Dogberry** *and* **Verges**,

Leon. I take leave of you, gentlemen till the morrow.

Ant. Good-night, my lords ; we expect you to-morrow morning.

D. Pedro. We will surely keep the appointment.

Claud. I shall go to-night to Hero's tomb to mourn her death.

Leon. [To the watch] Bring these rascals along. I shall find out from Margaret how she became acquainted with this villain.

[*Exeunt* severally.

Scene II. Leonato's *garden.*

Enter **Benedick** *and* **Margaret meeting.**

Bene. Pray thee, sweet Mistress Margaret, deserve well at my hands by helping me to the speech of Beatrice.

Marg. Will you then write me a sonnet in praise of my beauty ?

Bene. In so high a style, Margaret, that no man living shall *come over it*[1] ; for, in most comely truth, thou deservest it.

Marg. To have no man come over me ! why, shall I always keep below stairs ?

Bene. Thy wit is as quick as the greyhound's mouth : it catches. 11

Marg. And yours as blunt as the *fencer's foils*[2] which hit, but hurt not.

Bene. A most manly wit, Margaret ; it will not hurt a woman : and so, I pray thee, call Beatrice : *I give thee the bucklers.*[3]

Marg. Give us the swords ; we have *bucklers*[4] of our own.

Bene. If you use them, Margaret, you must put in the pikes, with a vice ; and they are dangerous weapons for maids.

Marg. Well, I will call Beatrice to you, who I think hath legs. [*Exit Margaret.*

Bene. And therefore will come.

[*Sings*] The god of love,
That sits above,
And knows me, and knows me
How pitiful I deserve,— 27

I mean in singing ; but in loving, Leander the good swimmer, Troilus the first employer of pandars, and a whole bookful of these *quondom*[5] *carpet-mongers*[6] whose names yet run smoothly in the even road of a blank verse, why, they were never so truly *turned over and over*[7] as my poor self in love. Marry, I cannot show it in rhyme : I have tried : I can find out no rhyme to 'lady' but 'baby,' an *innocent*[8] rhyme ; for 'scorn,' 'horn,' a hard rhyme ; for 'school,' 'fool,' a babbling rhyme ; very ominous endings :

1. Pun on 'style and stile.'
2. Blunted weapons.
3. I own myself beaten---I drop my shield.
4. Shields, targets.
5. Former.
6. Carpet-knights.
7. Completely overnome with love.
8. Silly, foolish.

Scene II, Leonato's garden.

[*Enter* **Benedick** *and* **Margaret,** Meeting

Bene. Dear Mistress Margaret, do please help me in having an opportunity for a talk with Beatrice, for which act of kindness I shall reward you handsomely.

Marg. If I do, will you promise to compose a poem in honour of my beauty ?

Bene. Yes, I will write one in such a lofty manner that no one shall ever excel it, for in fair truth, your beauty fully deserve such a tribute.

Marg. Why, no man will ever have me ! Shall I have to remain single in my life ?

Bene. Your wit runs as swiftly as a greyhound : it siezes the point as quickly as the greyhound catches the game,

Marg. Yours, on the other hand, has no point, like the fencer's blunted sword used in practising.

Bene. Then my wit is full of gallantry as a man's shou ld be ; it will not wound a woman. I drop my shield-confessing myself beaten in this wit combat. I beg you to bring Beatrice here.

Marg. We women can defend ourselves. We need only swords or weapons of offence. We have bucklers or shields of our own.

Bene. If you use your buckler for self-defence you must affix the central spike by a screw. But that is a very unsafe thing for a woman to do.

Marg. Well, I shall now go and call Beatrice here. I think she will come. [*Exit* **Margaret.**

Bene. That she will.

[*Sings*] Cupid in heaven knows my pangs, and my little worth, as a singer. But as for my capacity for loving, it is tremendons. Leander who used to swim the Hellespont every night to visit his beloved, Troilus, the first to use a go-between in love and the whole host of old-time carpet-knights (lovers) who are still sung in epics and love poems,—why, they were never so utterly lost in love as I. But it is a pity I cannot express my feelings in verse, though I have tried my hand at it. I can find no better rhyme for 'lady' than 'baby' which is a silly rhyme, 'for scorn' than 'horn' which is harsh rhyme, 'for shool' than 'fool' which is a childish rhyme. Such absurd rhyme would offend my beloved. No. I am not born a poet, for no

no, I was not born under a *rhyming planet*,[1] nor I cannot woo in *festival*[2] terms.

Enter **Beatrice**.

Sweet Beatrice, wouldst thou come when I call thee?

Beat. Yea, signior, and depart when you bid me.

Bene. O, stay but till then;

Beat. 'Then' is spoken; fare you well now: and yet, ere, I go, let me go with that I came; which is, with knowing what hath passed between you and Claudio.

Bene. Only foul words; and thereupon I will kiss thee.

Beat. Foul words is but foul wind, and foul wind is but foul breath, and foul breath is *noisome*[3]; therefore I will depart unkissed.

Bene. Thou hast frighted the *word*[4] out of *his*[5] right sense, so forcible is thy wit. But I must tell thee plainly, Claudio *undergoes*[6] my challange; and either I must shortly hear from him, or I will *subscribe*[7] him a coward. And, I pray thee now, tell me for which of my bad parts didst thou first fall in love with me?

Beat. For them all together; which maintained so politic a state of evil that they will not admit any good part to intermingle with them. But for which of my good parts did you first suffer love for me?

Bene. Suffer love! a good *epithet*[8]! I do suffer love indeed, for I love thee against my will.

Beat. *In spite of*[9] your heart, I think; alas, poor heart! If you spite it for my sake. I will spite it for yours! for I will never love that which my friend hates.

Bene. Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably.

Beat. It appears not in this confession; there's not one wise man among twenty that will praise himself.

Bene. An old, an old *instance*,[10] Beatrice, *that lived*[11] in the time of *good neighbours*.[12] If a man do not erect in this age his own tomb ere he dies, he shall live no longer *monument*[13] than the bell rings and the widow weeps.

Beat. And how long is that, think you?

1. Old astrological idea.
2. Holiday i.e., finely embellished terms.
3. Offensive
4. The foul words.
5. Its.
6. Lies under.
7. Proclaim him.
8. Expression.
9. Contempt
10. Proverbial saying.
11. That held good, was true.
12. When every one gave another his due.
13. Memory.

poetic star was in the ascendant at the moment of my birth ; nor can I court a lady in finely embellished language.

Enter Beatrice.

Dear Beatrice, were you willing to come when I sent for you ?

Beat. Yes, sir, and as willing to go away when you ask me to.

Bene. Oh, how delighted I would be if you remained here till I said the word 'Go'.

Beat. You have already said it, so I am going. But let me know what I have come to hear *viz.*, what happened when you Claudio.

Bene. We exchanged only abusive words. Now I must kiss you.

Beat. No, you must not, for abusive words are but foul air ; foul air is but foul breath which is offensive. Therefore you must not kiss me.

Bene. Your clever word-play has twisted the word out of its right meaning. But to be plain, he lies under my challenge, and he must either accept it or be declared a coward. Do please tell me now which of my evil qualities attracted you to me first ?

Beat. No one but all of them which preserve such a crafty constitution of unmixed evil that they won't allow a single good quality to mix with them. Now tell me for which of my good qualities you first endured the pangs of love.

Bene. "Endure"—a happy expression indeed ! Yes, I have to endure, for I am compelled to love you against my will.

Beat. Then by falling in love you spite your own heart, poor thing ! If you are cruel to your heart for my sake, I must be cruel too for your sake, for I cannot be kind to one to which my friend is unkind.

Bene. Both of us, you and I, are too clever to carry on a peacefull and pleasant courtship.

Beat. At least I do not discover any cleverness in your speech, for clever men do not indulge in self-praise,

Bene. This is an old saying that held good in the old times when men were not envious. But in the present time, if a man does not raise his own memorial in his own life time (to ensure the perpetuation of his memory), people will cease to remember him even the moment the death knell ceases to sound and the dead man's widow ceases to mourn.

Beat. And how soon will that be ?

Bene. *Question*[1] : an hour in *clamour*[2] and a quarter in *rheum*[3] : therefore is it most expedient for the wise, if Don Worm, his conscience, find no impediment to the contrary, to be the *trumpet*[4] of his own virtues, as I am to myself. So much for praising myself, who, I myself will bear witness, *is*[5] praise-worthy : and now tell me, how doth your cousin ?

Beat. Very ill ?

Bene. And how do you ?

Beat. Very ill too.

Bene. Serve God, love me and *mend*.[6] There will I leave you too, for here comes one in haste.

Enter **Ursula.**

Usr. Madam, you must come to your uncle. Yonder's *old coil*[7] at home : it is proved my Lady Hero hath been falsely accused, the prince and Claudio *mightily abused*[8]; and Don John is the author of all, who is fled and gone. Will you come *presently*[9] ?

Beat. Will you go hear this news, signior.

Bene. I will live in thy heart, die in thy lap and be buried in thy eyes ; and moreover I will go with thee to thy uncle's. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *A church.*

Enter **Don Pedro, Claudio,** *and three or four with tapers.*

Claud. Is this the *monument*[10] of Leonato ?

A Lord. It is, my lord.

Claud. [*Reading out of a scroll*]

Done to death[11] by slanderous tongues
Was the Hero that here lies :
Death, in *guerdon*[12] of her wrongs,
Give her fame which never dies.
So the life that died with shame
Lives in death with glorious fame.
Hang thou there upon the tomb,
Praising her when I am dumb.

No *music*,[13] sound, and sing your solemn hymn.

1. That is the question or point.
2. Of the funeral bell.
3. Tears.
4. Trumpeter.
5. Am.
6. Imprbve, got better.
7. Great disturbance, awful row.
8. Greatly deccvied.
9. At once.
10. Family vault.
11. Murdered.
12. Reward recompense.
13. Musicians.

Bene. Ah, This is the point; why, he will be clean forgotten in an hour or so, we guess, for the bell will toll for an hour and the widow weep for a quarter. So it is advisable for a wise man, if his conscience does not bite him to sing his own praise as I am doing. That is why I, a worthy fellow as I myself can testify, praise myself. Now tell me how is Hero?

Bear. Very miserable.

Bene. How are you?

Beat. Very miserable too.

Bene. Do what is right and love me; then you will feel better. I must go now, as I see some one coming this way in a hurry.

Enter **Ursula.**

Urs. Lady Beatrice, Signior Leonato asks you to see him immediately. There is a lot of uproar in the house, for it has been discovered that the Lady Hero has been falsely accused and Prince Don Pedro and Count Claudio have been terribly deceived. Don John, the source of all this mischief, has made good his escape.

Beat. Will you come with me, Benedick, and hear about this affair?

Bene. My dear lady, my life is inseparably bound up with yours. I will dwell in your heart, die in your arms and find myself a grave in your lovely eyes. And in addition to all this, I am coming with you at once. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III. A *Church.*

Enter **Don Pedro, Claudio,** *and three or four with tapers.*

Claud. Is this family vault of Leonato?

A Lord. Yes, my lord.

Claud. [Reading out of a scroll] Here sleeps the Lady Hero killed by the poison of false calumnies. As a recompense for this wrong. Death has bestowed upon her deathless renown so that she; whom men slew with scandal, lives in their memory for ever and for ever crowned with immortal glory. My verse, may you hang upon her tomb and sing her praise even after my voice is hushed in death. Now musicians, sing the solemn requiem.

Song

Pardon, *goddess of the night*,[1]
Those that slew thy virgin knight;
For the which, with songs of woe,
Round about her tomb they go.
Midnight, assist our moan;
Help us to sigh and groan,
Heavily, heavily:
Graves, yawn and yield your dead,
Till death be *uttered*[2]
Heavily, heavily.

Claud. Now unto thy bones good night!
Yearly will I do this rite.

D. Pedro. *Good morrow*[3] masters; put your torches out:
The wolves have prey'd; and look, the gentle day,
Before the wheels of Phoebus, round about,
Dapples[4] the drowsy east with spots of grey.
Thanks to you all, and leave us: fare you well.

Claud. Good morrow, masters: each his *several*[5] way.

D. Pedro. Come, let us hence, and put on other *weeds*[6]:
And then to Leonato's we will go.

Claud. And Hymen now with luckier issue *speed's*[7]
Then this for whom we rendered up this *woe*[8]
[*Exeunt*.

Scene IV. *A Room in* Leonato's *house.*
Enter **Leonato, Antonio, Benedick, Beatrice, Margaret, Ursula, Friar Francis,** *and* **Hero.**

Friar. Did I not tell you she was innocent?

Leon. So are the prince and Claudio, who accused her
Upon[9] the error that you heard *debated*:[10]
But Margaret was in *some fault*[11] for this,
Although against her will, as it appears
In the true course of all *question*.[12]

Ant. Well, I am glad that all things *sort*[13] so well.

Bene. And so am I, being else by *faith*[14] enforced
To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.

1. Diana, moon-goddess as well goddess of virginity.
2. (1) Proclaimed (2) vanquished.
3. Good-morning.
4. Variegates.
5. Different.
6. Garments
7. Speed us
8. Mournful rites.
9. In consequence of.
10. Spoken of.
11. Partly to blame.
12. Enquiry.
13. Turn out
14. My pledge.

Song.

O Diana, goddess of virginity, forgive the murderers of this maiden, your chaste votaress. To implore your forgiveness, they circle round your grave singing their mournful dirge. O solemn darkness of the midnight hour, join in our sad lament, our deep sings and groans. Ye, shades of the surrounding dead, come forth from your graves and help us in singing the death-dirge till her death is proclaimed or published, sorrowfully.

Claud. Farewell, dear corpse ! I will perform this sacred ceremony every year.

D. Pedro. Good-morning, sirs, extinguish the lights now ; the night is over and the wolves have ceased to prowl about in scareh of pray : see, the sweet morning variegates and the sleepy eastern sky with grey streaks before the sun-god's fiery chariot. Thank you all very much. Good-bye.

Claud. Good-morning, gentlemen ; let each go his own way now.

D. Pedro. Let us go and change our clothes. We shall then call on Leonato,

Claud. May the God of marriage bring events to a happier end than in the case of Hero for whom we have just performed these mournful rites. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV. A room in Leonato's house.

Enter **Leonato, Antonio, Benedick, Beatrice, Margaret, Ursula, Friar Francis** *and* **Hero.**

Friar. Did not I tell you that the Lady Hero was inn ocent?

Leon. The Prince and Claudio are not to be blamed though they brought a false charge against Hero in consequence of the mistake you heard spoken of. But Margaret was partially at fault, although unintentionally, as I found in the course of investigation.

Ant. I feel very happy that things have turned out so nicely.

Bene. So do I, as otherwise I would have been bound by my pledge to fight Claudio.

Leon. Well, daughter, and you gentlewomen all,
Withdraw into a chamber by yourselves,
And when I send for you come hither mask'd, [*Exeunt Ladies*
The prince and Claudio promised by this hour.
To visit me. You know your office, brother :
You must be father to your brother's daugheer.
And give her to young Claudio.

Ant. Which I will do with *confirmed countenance*.[1]

Bene. Friar, I must entreat your pains. I think.

Friar. To do what, signior ?

Bene. To bid me, or *undo*[2] me ; one of them.
Signior Leonato, truth it is, good signior,
Your niece regards me with an eye of favour.

Leon. That eye my daughter lent her : 'tis more true.

Bene. And I do with an eye of love requite her.

Leon. This sight whereof I think you had from me.
From Claudio and the prince : but what's your will ?

Bene. Your answer, sir, is enigmatical :
But, for my *will*,[3] my will is your good will.
May *stand*[4] with ours, this day to be conjoin'd
In the state of honourable marriage :
In which good frair, I shall desire your help.

Leon. My heart is with your liking.

Friar. And my help,
Here comes the prince and Claudio.

Enter **Don Pedro** *and* **Claudio,** *and two or three others.*

D. Pedro. Good morrow to this fair assembly.

Leon. Good morrow, prince ; good morrow, Claudio;
We here *attend*[5] you. Are you *yet*[6] determined
To-day to marry with my brother's daughter ?

Claud. I'll *hold my mind*[7] where she *an Ethiope*,[8]

Leon. Call her forth, brather ; the friar ready. [*Exit Antonio.*

D. Pedro. Good morrow, Bendick. Why, what's the matter,
That you have such a *February face*.[9]
So full of frost, of storm and cloudiness ?

1. Calm, unmoved face.
2-(1) Ruin (2) unbind.
3. Wish, desire.
4. Coincide.
5. Are awaiting you.
6. Still.
7. Keep to my determination.
8. Native of Ethiopia i.e., a black woman.
9. Cold face.

Leon. Now, Hero and all the other ladies, retire into another room and return with masks on when I ask you to. [*Exeunt Ladies*]. It is time Don Pedro and Claudio arrived according to their promise. You remember what you have to do. Antonio ; you must play the role of your niece's father to-day and give her away to Claudio.

Ant. You may depend upon me for doing it with an unmoved face (so as not to disclose the secret).

Bene. Gentle priest, I shall have to ask you to do me a service.

Friar. What have I to do, sir ?

Bene. You bind me in marriage or ruin me, as you please, Signior Leonato, Beatrice really looks upon me with affection.

Leon. True ; it was Hero who managed it. It is a fact.

Bene. And I also regard her with the same feelings.

Leon. You owe it to Don Pedro, Claudio and myself that you learnt to look upon her that way. But what do you want ?

Bene. Your first statement is unintelligible to me. But as for my desire, you may agree with mine and Beatrice's. Want to be united in matrimony ; so I shall have need of your services, good priest.

Leon. My wishes perfectly harmonise with yours.

Friar. And I am at your service. Here come the Prince and Count Claudio.

Enter **Don Pedro** *and* **Claudio,** *and two or three others.*

D. Pedro. Good-morning to this honourable gathering of lords and gentlemen.

Leon. Good-morning to you both—Prince and Count. We are all waiting for you. Do you still keep to your words to marry my niece ?

Claud. I would keep to my promise even if she were a negress.

Leon. Bring her here, Antonio, the Priest is ready to marry the couple. [*Exit* **Antonio.**

D. Pedro. Good-morning, Benedick. What is wrong with you ! You look so cold, so angry and so gloomy ?

Claud. I think he thinks upon the savage bull.
Tush, fear not, man : we'll tip thy horns with gold,
And all Europa shall rejoice at thee,
As once Europa did at lusty Jove.
When he would play the noble beast in love.

Bene. Bull Jove, sir, had an amiable low ;
And some such strange bull leap'd you father's cow.
And got a calf in that same noble feat.
Much like to you, for you have just his bleat.

Claud. For this I owe you : here comes *other reckonings*.[1]

Re-enter Antonio, *with the* Ladies *masked.*

Which is the lady I must *seize upon* ?[2]

Ant. This same is she, and I do give you her.

Claud. Why, then she's mine. Sweet, let me see your face.

Leon. No, that you shall not, till you take her hand
Before this friar and swear to marry her.

Claud. Give me your hand : before this holy friar.
I am your husband, if you *like*[3] of me.

Hero. And when I lived, I was your other wife.
[*Unmasking*]. And when you loved, you were my other husband.

Claud. Another Hero !

Hero. Nothing certainer !
One Hero died *defiled*[4], but I do live,
And surely as I live I am a maid.

D. Pedro. The former Hero ! Hero that is dead.

Leon. She died, my lord, but whiles her slander lived.

Friar. All this amazement can I *qualify*[5].
When after that the holy rites are ended.
I'll tell you *largely*[6] of fair Hero's death:
Meantime, let wonder seem *familiar*[7],
And to the chapel let us presently.

Bene. *Soft and fair*[8] friar, which is Beatrice ?

Beat. [*Unmasking*] I answer to that name.
What is your will ?

Bene. Do not you love me ?

Beat. Why, : no more than reason,

Bene. Why, then your uncle and the prince and Claudio.
Have been deceived ; they swore you did.

1. Other matters to be settled.
2. Take possession of.
3. Approve.
4. Slandred.
5. Moderate
6. At length in detail.
7. Of common occurrence.
8. Gently ! gently.

Claud. I suppose he is brooding over his rash vows against marriage and his mischievous references to marital faithlessness. Don't be afraid, my dear fellow, if you grow horns ; after your marriage we will gild their tips. The whole of Europe will be delighted. The beautiful Europa was married when the strong Zeus came wooing her in the form of a fine bull.

Bene. But the bull, you speak of, sir, had a pleasant voice. Some clumsy bull must have begotten you, for you bleat exactly like a calf.

Claud. For this I owe you a debt which I shall pay later on ; now there are other matters in hand which require settlement.

Re-enter **Antonio,** *with the* **Ladies** *masked.*

Which of these ladies I am to take ?

Ant. This is the lady whom I give away to you.

Claud. Then she belongs to me now. Take of your mask and let me see you, darling.

Leon. No, that you must not do till you take a solemn pledge before this priest to wed her.

Claud. Put your hand in mine, lady : I promise to marry you in the presence of this holy priest if you consider me acceptable.

Hero. You almost married me when I was alive. As a husband, you loved me. [Unmasking.

Claud. What ! Is she a second Hero ?

Hero. Nothing could be more sure. The old Hero died through slander ; but I, the new Hero, am alive, and, as sure as I am alive, I am a true maiden.

D. Pedro. The old Hero, the one that died, has come back to life.

Leon. She was dead, my lord, only as long as the calumnies against her were believed.

Friar. I shall moderate your astonishment and explain the mystery when the marriage ceremony is over. I shall tell you, in detail, the story of Hero's apparent death. For the time being, look upon the strange things as matters of daily occurrence and let us proceed to the church at once.

Bene. Stay for a moment, good priest. Which of these masked ladies is Beatrice ?

Beat. [Unmasking] That is my name. What do you want ?

Bene. Are you not in love with me ?

Beat. Very slightly ; not more than is reasonable.

Bene. If so, then the Prince, Claudio and Leonato were all wrong ; they declared an oath that you loved me.

Beat. Do not you love me ?

Bene. Troth, no ; no more than reason.

Beat. Why, then my cousin Margaret and Ursula. Are much deceived ; for they did swear you did.

Bene. They swore that you were almost sick for me.

Beat. They swore that you were well-nigh dead for me.

Bene. 'Tis *no such matter*[1]. Then you do not love me ?

Beat. No, truly, but in friendly recompense.

Leon. Come, cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.

Claud. And I'll be sworn upon't that he loves her ;
For here's a paper written in his hand,
A *halting*[2] sonnet of his *own pure brain*[3],
Fashion'd to Beatrice.

Hero. And here's another
Writ in my cousin's hand, stolen from her pocket.
Containing her affection *unto*[4] Benedick.

Bene. A miracle ? here's our own hands *against*[5] our hearts. Come, I will have thee ; but, *by this light*,[6] I take thee for pity.

Beat. I *would not*[7] deny you ; but *by this good day*,[8] I yield upon great persuasion ; and partly to save your life, for I was told you were in a consumption.

Bene. Peace ! I will stop your mouth. [*Kissing her.*

D. Pedro. How dost thou, Benedick, the married man ?

Bene. I'll tell thee what, prince ; a college of *witcrackers*[9] cannot *flout*[10] me out of my *humour*[11]. Dost thou think I care for a satire or an epigram ? No ; if a man will be beaten with brains, a' shall wear nothing handsome about him. In brief, since I do propose to marry, I will think nothing to any purpose that the world can say against it ; and therefore never flout at me for what I have said against it ; for man is a *giddy*[12] thing, and this is my conclusion. For thy part, Claudio, I did think to have beaten thee ; but in that thou art like to be my kinsman, live unbruised and love my cousin.

1. Nothing of the kind.
2. Limping in metre.
3. Entirely his own.
4. For.
5. Witnesses against.
6. An oath.
7. I do not desire.
8. An oath.
9. Professional jesters.
10. Mock.
11. Purpose.
12. Fickle.

Beat. Are you not in love with me ?

Bene. You speak the truth, very slightly ; not more than is reasonable.

Beat. If so, then Hero, Margaret and Ursula were all wrong ; they declared solemnly that you loved me.

Bene. Well, I was told that you were almost sick for me.

Beat. Well, my friends told me that you were nearly dead with love for me.

Bene. Nothing of the sort ! Then you mean to say that you don't care for me ?

Beat. Just a little, only as much as one friend may for another by way of a return.

Leon. Enough of it, Beatrice ! I can swear that you love Benedick.

Claud. And I can also say on oath that Benedick loves Beatrice, As a proof, here is a rotten love-poem in a limping metre in his own hand-writing, wholly a creation of his own fancy, addressed to Beatrice.

Hero. And I have with me a poem in Beatrice's hand-writing, pouring out her love for Benedick. I have secretly removed it from her pocket.

Bene. An extraordinary thing ! Our hands are witnesses against our hearts, the former contradict the latter. All right, I take you : but it is out of sheer pity for you, I assure you.

Beat. I will not refuse you ; but, I assure you, I agree very reluctantly to the earnest request of friends and also to save you from death, for I was given to understand that you were wasting away with love-fever.

Bene. Silence ! I will seal your lips with a kiss. [*Kissing her.*

D. Pedro. Hallo, Benedick the husband !

Bene. My lord, even a whole army of jesters is powerless to make me budge an inch from my purpose by making fun of me. Surely you don't believe for a moment that I mind sarcasm or satire in the least ! If a man allows himself to be ridiculed out of his purpose, he will never have the courage to put on handsome clothes. To sum up. I have made up my mind to marry, I do not care what the whole world may say against it ; so it is no use jeering at me for my former remarks against matrimony. Man is a changeable creature and present determination to marry is the last conclusion I have arrived at. As for you, Claudio, at one time I thought of giving you a sound thrashing, but as we are going to be relatives by marriage, I will let you live unmolested and love cousin Hero,

Claud. I had well hoped thou wouldst have denied Beatrice, that I might have cudgelled thee out of thy single life, to make thee a *double-dealer*;[1] which, out of question, thou wilt be, if my cousin do not look exceeding *narrowly*[2] to thee.

Bene. Come, come, we are friends : let's have a dance ere we are married, that we may lighten our own hearts and our wives heels.

Leon. We'll have dancing afterward.

Bene. First, of my word : therefore play, *music*.[3] Prince, thou art *sad*[4] ; get thee a wife ; there is no staff more reverend than one tipped with horn.

Enter a **Messenger.**

Mess. My lord, your brother John is ta'en in flight. And brought with armed men back to Messina.

Bene. Think not on him till to-morrow ; I'll devise thee *brave*[5] punishment for him. Strike up, pipers.

[*Dance. Exeunt.*

1. Deceiver.
2. Closely.
3. Musicians.
4. Serious.
5. Excellent.

Claud. I hoped that you would refuse to marry Beatrice so that I might have thrashed you out of your celibacy into a 'double' life; thus making you at once a double man and a deceiver, I am sure you will be an unfaithful husband if Beatrice does not keep a sharp watch over you.

Bene. Enough of wordy battle! Let us have a dance before our marriage to cheer ourselves up.

Leon. We shall have the dance after the marriage.

Bene. No, on my word, we will have the dance first; so strike up, musicians. Prince, you look too serious: my advice to you is to get married like myself. As there is no walking stick more venerable than one headed with a cross-piece of horn so there is no state of life more honourable than that of the cuckold with his head crowned with horns.

Enter **a Messenger.**

Mess. Prince, your brother Don John has been arrested while fleeing from the city, and brought back under an armed guard.

Bene. Don't worry about him till to-morrow. I will invent some fine punishment for him. Strike up the music, musicians.

[Dance, *Exeunt.*

NOTES

Abb. indicates reference to Abbot's "Shakespearian Grammar

ACT I. *Scene 1.*

Stage Direction. Among the *dramatis personae* both the folio and the quarto include Innogen, the wife of Leonato; and Collier supposes that she was present, though she spoke nothing throughout the play. This seems impossible, for, as Dyce remarks, "There are scenes in which the mother of Hero *must* have spoken; she could not have stood on the stage without a word to say about the disgrace of her daughter:" etc. Theobald therefore was probably right when he conjectured that "the poet had in his first plan designed such a character, which, on a survey of it, he found would be superfluous, and therefore he left it out."

3. by this, i. e. time.

6. sort. The majority of commentators explain this to mean *rank, distinction,* as in l. 28 below. Steevens inclines to the commoner meaning, *kind,* and the words 'and none of name' seem to be in favour of his view.

10. much deserved . . . Pedro. Claudio's exploits fully deserved all the honour which Don Pedro was so careful to bestow upon him.

11. he hath borne . . . lion. Compare the speech of Cominius about Coriolanus, *Cor.* ii. 2. 91-105.

13. better bettered, cp. *Mach,* i. 4. 21,

"More is thy due than more than all can pay."

15. very much glad, we should now say *very glad*; see Abb. 51.

18. that joy . . . bitterness. Cp. *Macb.* i. 4. 33-5,

"My plenteous joys,
Wanton in fulness, seek to hide themselves
In drops of sorrow."

For *badge,* i. e. distinguishing mark, Steevens compares Chapman's *Odyssey,* bk. x., "Our eyes wore
The same wet *badge* of weak humanity".

22. kind . . . kindness, natural overflow of tenderness.

25. Signior Montanto, a term from fencing, but used by Beatrice as an ironical description of Benedick's courage and prowess. Steevens compares *Every Man in his Humour,* "Your punto, your reverso, your stoccata, your passada, your *montanto*" and *M. W.* ii. 3. 27, "Thy reverse, thy distance, thy *montant.*"

29. what, for *who,* but less definite: see Abb. 254, who, however, is inclined to doubt whether in such expressions as that in the text there was any sense of quality indicated.

31. as pleasant, as full of fun and humour.

32, he set up . . . bird-bolt. The expression *to set up bills* was most commonly used (as here) of the posting of placards by public challengers; but Douce has shown that the practice was not confined to challenges only, the "bills" being used as general advertisements much in the same way as at the present day. *Flights* were long, light-feathered arrows; *bird-bolts,* short, thick arrows without

a point, and spreading at the extremity into a blunt-knobbed head. Douce explains, "Benedick from a vain conceit of his influence over women, challenged Cupid at *roving*, a particular kind of archery in which *flight* arrows are used. In other words, he challenged him to shoot at hearts. The fool, to ridicule this piece of vanity, in his turn challenged Benedick to shoot at crows with the cross-bow and bird-bolt; an inferior kind of archery used by fools, who for obvious reasons were not permitted to shoot with pointed arrows." *Subscribed Cupid*, accepted the challenge in lieu of Cupid, or on Cupid's behalf.

37. to eat all of his killing : cp. *H. V.* iii. 7. 99.

38. tax, you jeer at him too freely, are too witty at his expense. So in *A. Y. L.* i. 2. 91, the fool is told that he will "be whipped for *taxation* one of these days," that is, for being too free with his tongue : the verb in this sense is frequent in Shakespeare.

39. be meet with you, even with you, a match for you : cp. *Bartholomew Fair*, ii. 1, "Well, I shall be *meet with* your mumbling mouth one day."

41. victual. Rolfe points out that elsewhere Shakespeare uses the plural, and that, in Essay xxxiii., Bacon has both the singular and plural.

holp, this form for the perfect and for the past participle is frequent in Shakespeare, and in fact seems to have been preferred by him to the weak form *helped.*

42. valiant trencher-man, good eater : *trencher*, a plate. Shakespeare has also *trencher-friends*, parasites, *T. of A.* iii. 6. 106, and *trencher-knight*, a serving-man attending at table, *L. L. L.* v. 2. 464.

45. and a good, etc. Beatrice wilfully misunderstands the messenger.

57. stuffed, if used in this way nowadays would carry with it something of a ludicrous sense ; but though Beatrice uses it immediately afterwards in a comical way, it is employed by Shakespeare without any such limitation to mean *full of*; *e. g. W. T.* ii. 1. 185—

"Cleomenes and Dion whom you know
Of *stuffed* sufficiency,"

and, again, *R. and J.* iii. 5. 183—

"*Stuff'd*, as they say, with honourable parts,"

49. a stuffed man, not a real man, a man made up of stuffing, like a doll. Farmer supposes that Beatrice checks herself after using the words, as though she had employed them in the sense of a *cuckold*,—a sense which they no doubt sometimes bore. But there seems no necessity for this. Her pause is merely to give point to her wit by pretending that she did not like to say all she might in his disparagement. In a similar way Portia in *M. V.* i. 2. 60-1, says of Monsieur le Bon, "God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man."

55. five wits. "The five intellectual faculties," says Delius, corresponding with the five senses are *common wit*, *imagination*, *fancy*, *estimation*, *memory* ; and he quotes from *Sonnet* cxli, 9, 10—

"But my *five wits* nor my five senses can
Dissuade one foolish heart from serving thee".

Here the expression possibly means nothing more than the five senses, and of its use with that sense Delius quotes an instance from Chaucer's *Persones Tale*, "Certes delites been after the appetites of the *five wittis*, as sight, hearing, smelling, savouring, and touching."

went halting off, were so lamed in the cotest as to be almost useless.

56. governed : cp. *M. of V.* iv. 1. 184.

wit enough, etc., if he has intelligence enough to keep himself warm, let him regard it as the only thing in which he is superior to his horse. The expression is proverbial : cp. *T. S.*, i. 1. 258.

difference, an heraldic term : cp. *Haml.* iv. 5. 183, "You must wear your rue with a *difference*."

59. to be known, to cause him to be known for a, etc.

60. sworn brother : cp. *H. V.* ii. 1. 13, *R. II.* v. 1. 20. "An expression originally derived from the *fratres jurati*, who in the days of chivalry mutually bound themselves by oath to share each other's fortune" (Dyce).

62. he wears . . . block. His faith changes as rapidly as the fashions in dress. The block on which hats were shaped is again referred to in *Lear* iv. 6. 187. "The hats of the time," says Singer, "seem to have been capable of being-reshaped ; as they were of felt they were new blocked as whim or fashion led. There is a passage *Euphues*, employing the same type of changeable friendship." The passage referred to is as follows : —"But thy friendship, Philautus, is lyke a new fashion, which being used in the morning is accompted olde before noone, which varietie of chaunging, being oftentimes noted of a grave gentleman in *Naples*, who having bought *a hat of the newest* fashion and best *block* in all *Italy*," etc. ; and again, "But when, *Philautus*, thou shalt see...that there is no more hold in a new friend than a new fashion, yet *hats* alter as fast as the turner can turne his *block*," etc.

64. is not in your books, is not in your favour. The origin of this expression is variously said to be from codicils or wills ; from memorandum-books ; from matriculation records ; from books of heraldry ; from lists of retainers ; from lists of those to whom a tradesman gives credit. Beatrice, pretending to take the words in a literal sense, replies,"No ; were he, I would burn them."

my study, abstract for concrete, that which I study, my books. Cp. *Temp*. i. 2. 74.

66. squarer, quarrelsome young fellow, roysterer ; Shakespeare uses the verb literally in *M. N. D.* ii. 1. 30, and figuratively in *A. C.* iii. 3. 41.

71. presently, immediately, as most frequently, in Shakespeare. The modern, but less correct meaning, viz., in a short time, soon, is also used by him.

73. the Bendick, as though she said "the plague." Cp. *Wit. Without Money*, iii. I, "Are you *sick o' the Valentine* ?"

75. I will hold friends, I will keep friends with you, will not venture to bandy words with you. To "make friends," which Rolfe quotes from *M. M.* i. 2. 185, has a different sense, viz., to acquire the friendship, ingratiate oneself with.

77. **you will . . . niece,** *i. e.* you are so already.

81. **your trouble** : cp. *Macb.* i. 6. 11-14—
"The love that follows us sometime is our *trouble*,
Which still we thank as love: Herein I teach you
How you shall bid God 'ild us for your pains,
And thank us for your trouble."

82. **encounter it,** *i. e.* meet it of your owu accord.

84. **should remaint,** ought to remain, might to expected to remain.

86. **your charge,** the burden laid upon you.

92. **you have it full,** full in the face, like a well-delivered blow. If, says Don Pedro, Leonato is free from doubt on the subject because you were at that time but a child, we may guess what kind of a character is yours now that you have grown to manhood.

93. **fathers herself,** shows, by her likeness to him, who was her father.

96. **if signior . . .she is.** Like him as she may be, she would not wish to change places with him ; she would prefer being herself

99. **still,** ever continually.

100. **nobody marks you,** heeds you, pays any attention to what you say.

102. **is it possible,** etc. Steevens compares *Coriolanus* ii. 1. 93, "Our very priests must become *mockers*, if they encounter such ridiculous subjects as you are."

103. **courtesy . . . presence,** you are enough to turn courtesy into disdain if you show yourself. The confusion between "itself" and "her presence" is due to Benedick's having personified "Disdain." *Meet*, suitable ; possibly with a pun.

104. **convert** in an intransitive sense is not uncommon in Shakespeare.

106. **loved of,** see Abb. 170.

107. **in my heart,** probably with a secondary sense, *i. e.* heartily, truly.

109. **a dear happiness,** "true good luck : cf. *R. and J.* iii, 3. 28, 'This is dear mercy'" (Rolfe).

111. **I am of your,** etc., in that respect at all events we are of the same mind.

blood, temperament.

114. **a predestinate scratched face,** the scratched face which is the destiny of any one who marries you : for the form *predestinate* see Abb. 342.

116. **as yours were.** Collier says that this was certainly the language of Shakespeare's day, which Dyce is inclined to doubt.

117. **well . . . parrot-teacher,** just the person who would be fit to teach parrots, being always ready with sayings and sentences that they would be able to repeat.

119. **and so...continuer,** and did not tire any more than your tongue does : as 'good a stayer,' as we say of race-horses.

120. **keep** your way, remain as you are.

122. **you always...trick.** Delius compares *A. W.* iv. 5. 64, "If I put any tricks upon em, sir, they shall be *jade's* tricks." *Jade*,

which is properly a tired, panting, exhausted animal, came to be applied as an opprobrious term to both men and women : cp. *H. V.* iii. 7. 63.

131. being reconciled...**I**, etc. : *i. e. you* being reconciled, etc.

133. I am not of many words, the more common modern phrase is "I am not *a man* of many words." Rolfe compares *M. M.* ii. 1. 204, and *Oth.* v. 1. 65.

135. please it, etc., will it please, etc.

139. I noted her not, I did not think her worth much observation : possibly for the sake of the play upon the words *note* and *not* ; see blow ii. 3. 51.

143. as being...**sex**, as one who makes it his avowed practice to treat men harshly.

146. fair, *i. e.* in colour,

152. inquire after, in the commercial sense of a would-be purchaser inquiring after some commodity, its price, etc.

155. sad, serious' sober, as frequently in Shakespeare.

the flouting Jack, an impudent, saucy fellow : cp. *Jack-sauce*, *H. V.* iv. 7. 148, and 'played the *Jack*,' *Temp.* iv. 1. 198. "The phrase 'Thou Sire John' is in Chaucer, *C. T.* 14, 816 ; on which Tyrwhitt remarks, 'I know not how it happened, that in the principal modern language John, or its equivalent, is a name of contempt, or at least of slight. So the Italians use *Gianni*, from whence *Zani* ; the Spaniards *Juan*, as *bobo Juan*, a foolish John ; the French *Jean*, with various additions ; and in English, when we call a man *a John*, we do not mean it as a title of honour. Chaucer, in l. 3708, uses *Jacke-fool* as the Spaniards do *bobo Juan*, and I suppose *jack-ass* has the same etymology" (Skeat, *Ety.Dict*).

to tell us...**carpenter.** "This...is nothing more than an example of what Puttenham terms '*Antiphrasis*' or the '*Broad floute*' : 'Or when we deride by plaine and flat contradiction, as he that saw a dwarfe go in the streets said to his companion that walked with him : See yonder gyant ; and to a negro or woman blackemoore. In good sooth ye are a faire one.'—*The Arte of English Poesie.* 1589" [p. 201 Arber's Reprints]" (Staunton) : Cupid of course being blind, and Vulcan a smith.

157. in what key...**song** ? How may one be in harmony, accord with you ? *Key*, "the fundamental note of a musical composition" (Schmidt), is used by Shakespeare both literally and metaphorically : cp. *clef* (the same word in French), *J. C.* v. 2. 11, "And any man may sing her, if he can take her *clef*."

160. no such matter, nothing of the kind.

161. there's her cousin, etc., "A hint of the half-liking for Reatrice which is hidden under Benedick's depreciation of her" (Rolfe).

168. but he will...**suspicion** ? Is there not a single man in the world who will avoid marriage and so escape the fear that his wife has cuckolded him. The old belief that a man who had suffered in this way had horns grow out of his forehead, a belief originating in the story of Acteon, is plenteously referred to in the dramatists and

other writers of the Elizabethan age.

170. **wear the print . Sundays**, let your determination to do so be seen in your sad and serious behaviour : "An allusion," says Steevens, "to the strict manner in which the Sabbath was observed by the *Puritans*, who usually spent that day in *sighs* and *gruntings*, and other hypocritical marks of devotion."

178. **on my allegiance**, *i. e.* I am bound to speak out when you lay that charge upon me ; otherwise nothing would induce me to tell.

180. **now that . . part**, it is your grace's part to ask with whom Claudio is in love : I cannot volunteer to tell that. Benedick is of course only to glad to tell.

with who, see Abb. 274.

182. **so were it uttered**, so should it be spoken.

183. **'it is not . . be so.'** Dyce (*Gloss.*) quotes the tale by Mr. Blakeway as heard from his great-aunt : "Once upon a time, there was a young lady (called Lady Mary in the story) who had two brothers. One summer they all three went to a country seat of theirs which they had not before visited. Among the other gentry in the neighbourhood who came to see them was a Mr. Fox, a bachelor, with whom they, particularly the young lady, were much pleased. He used often to dine with them, and frequently invited Lady Mary to come and see his house. One day that her brothers were absent elsewhere, and she had nothing better to do, she determined to go thither ; and accordingly set out unattended. When she arrived at the house, and knocked at the door, no one answered. At length she opened it and went in ; over the portal of the hall was written, '*Be bold, be bold, but not too bold*' : she advanced over the staircase, the same inscription : she went up ; over the entrance of a gallery, the same she proceeded ; over the door of a chamber, '*Be bold, be bold, but not too bold, lest that your heart's blood should run cold.*' She opened it ; it was full of skeletons, tubs full of blood, etc. She retreated in haste : coming down stairs, she saw out of a window Mr. Fox advancing towards the house, with a drawn sword in one hand, while with the other he dragged along a young lady by her hair. Lady Mary had just time to slip down and hide herself under the stairs before Mr. Fox and his victim arrived at the foot of them. As he pulled the young lady upstairs, she caught hold of one of the banisters with her hand, on which was a rich bracelet. Mr. Fox cut it off with his sword ; the hand and bracelet fell into Lady Mary's lap, who then contrived to escape unobserved, and got home safe to her brothers' house. After a few days, Mr. Fox came to dine with them as usual (whether by invitation or of his own accord this deponent saith not). After dinner. when the guests began to amuse each other with extraodinary anecdotes, Lady Mary at length said she would relate to them a remarkable dream she had lately had. I dreamt, said she, that as you, Mr. Fox, had often invited me to yourhouse I would go there one morning, When I came to the house, I knocked, etc., but no one answered. When I opened the door, over the hall was written, '*Be bold, be bold, but not too bold.*' But, said she, turning to Mr. Fox, and smiling, '*It is not so, nor it was not so*' ; then she pursued the rest of the story, concluding at every turn with

'*It is not so, nor it was not so,*' till she comes to the room full of dead bodies when Mr. Fox took up the burden of the tale, and said, '*It is not so, nor it was not so, and God forbid it should be so,*' which he continues to repeat at every subsequent turn of the dreadful story, till she came to the circumstances of his cutting of the young lady's hand, when, upon his saying as usual, '*It is not so, nor it was not so, and God forbid it should be so,*' Lady Mary retorts, '*But it is so, and it was so, and here the hand I have to show,*' at the same time producing the hand and bracelet from her lap: whereupon the guests drew their swords and instantly cut Mr. Fox into a thousand pieces." On this Dyce (*Gloss., s. v. tale*) remarks, "The above may really be a modernized version of the old tale alluded to by Shakespeare: but Blakeway was not aware that one of the circumstances in the good lady's narrative is borrowed from Spenser's description of what Britomart saw in the castle of Busyrane . . . *The Faerie Queene.* B. iii. B. xi. stanzas 50, 54."

185. **passion**, the nature of my feelings, rather than my ardent love.

189. **to fetch me in**, to catch me, to find out my real feelings; not, I think, to take in, to dupe, as Schmidt explains it. Cp. *Haml.* ii. 1. 38, "a *fetch* of wit," a clever stratagem.

192. **by my...troths**. This seems to mean, by my faith and troth, which are two things; referring to the words of Don Pedro and Claudio.

196. **how she should be loved,** *not in what way* she should be loved, but *that* should, etc., answering to Claudio's "That I love her, I feel"; and so, 'nor know *that* she is worthy,' answering to the Prince's "That she is worthy, I know."

198. **die in it**, die maintaining that opinion.

199. **thou wast...beauty.** You are always so ready to deny the virtues of woman, that if you die at the stake it will be only what a heretic like you deserves.

201. **in the force of his will.** "alluding," says Warburton, "to the definition of a heretic in the schools"; according to which it was obstinate adherence to heterodox opinion that constituted heresy.

205. **but that...pardon me.** All womankind must excuse my determination never to give them the opportunity of cuckolding me. *Recheat* "is a particular lesson upon the horn to call dogs back from the scent: from the old French *recet*, which was used in the same sense as *retraite*" (Hanmer): *baldrick*, belt: *invisible*, because the horns of a cuckold were supposed to be so.

208. **and the fine...bachelor**, and to sum up, I will live, etc. *Go the finer*, be all the more handsomely dressed: the pun of course cannot be kept up in explanation.

213. **lose more...drinking,** become so pale with love that a draft of wine will not bring back the colour to my cheeks: *with* love, *with* drinking, *owing to* love, *by* drinking.

214. **pick out,** *i.e.* you may pick out.

215. **ballad-maker's pen** "refers jestingly," says Delius' "to the matter of those ballads in which the death or the misfortunes of

lovers play an important part" : of course with contempt for such an instrument.

brothel-house, the older and more-correct expression brothel being properly a person, not a place.

218. **argument**, subject (for ridicule), as very frequently in Shakespeare.

219. **hang me**, etc. "This was one of the barbarous sports of former times. The practice was to enclose a cat in a suspended coop of open bars, and shoot at it with arrows till the poor animal was killed—'arrowes flew faster than they did at *a catte in a basket*, when Prince Arthur, or the duke of Shoreditch, strucke up drumme in field.'—*Warres ; or The Peace is Broken*, a black-letter tract, quoted by Steevens" (Staunton).

bottle, with a wider sense than at present, a hollow enclosure,

220. **let him...Adam**. Let him be applauded as a famous archer. "An allusion to one of the three noted outlaws, famous for their skill in archery, who figure in the spirited and picturesque ballad entitled *Adam Bel, Clym of the Cloughe* and *Wyllyum of Cloudeslé*" (Dyce, *Gloss*).

222. **try**, prove.

223. **in time**, etc. "This line," says Delius, "is from Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, and runs thus, 'In time the savage bull sustains the yoke.' Kyd himself borrowed the whole passage from Watson's *Passionate Centurie of Love* (1582), where the line is, 'In time the bull is brought to bear the yoke.'" Both are adaptation from Ovid.

226. **let me be**, etc., let me be painted as vilely as the painting of a sign-board hung up in front of an alehouse, and let the motto under my portrait be, "Here you may see," etc.

229. **horn-mad**. The same pun occurs in *C. E.* ii. 1. 57. and in *M. W.* i. 4. 51.

232. **nay, if Cupid...shortly**, you will suffer for this before long, if Cupid has leisure to concern himself with love affairs anywhere except in Venice. That city in Shakespeare's time and afterwards was proverbial for the amours and dissipations of its inhabitants.

234. **I look**, etc., *i.e.* one thing is as likely as the other.

235. **you will...hours**, you will come to terms with, accommodate yourself to the hours : not, as Rolfe explains it. "come to terms in the course of time."

236. **repair to**, betake yourself to.

239. **I have almost**, etc., I may almost boast that I am capable of so important a task.

240. **and so...Benedick**. The reference is "to the formal conclusions of epistles dedicatory and letters. Barnaby Googe thus ends his dedication to the first edition of *Palingenesis*, 1560 : 'And thus committyng your Ladiship with all yours to the *tuicion* of the most merciful *God*, I ende. From Staple Inne at London, the eighte and twenty of March'" (Reed). Malone quotes two similar instances, and Rolfe well compares *R. of L.*, 1308, where Lucrece ends her letter thus:—

"So I commend me from our house in grief :
My woes are tedious, though my words are brief."

245. the body...neither, the main portion of your conversation is often, as now, patched up with quotations, etc, which have but little connection with its general purport.

246. guarded, trimmed, ornamented : cp. *M. of V.* ii. 2. 164, 2 *H. IV.* iv. 1. 34. The sub, in the same sense, whether literal or metaphorical, is not uncommon in Shakespeare : Rolfe compares, "O, rhymes are *guards* on wanton Cupid's hose," *L. L. L.* iv. 3. 58, "*And the guards are but slightly basted on neither* "=nor are the guards (these tags of quotations) basted on except slightly : an old colloquial idiom still to be heard among the lower classes.

247. For old ends cp. *R. III.* i. 3. 337, "with *old odd ends* stolen forth of holy writ."

ere you flout ..conscience : in these words there does not seem to be any such recondite meaning as Johnson and other commentators would give to them. Benedick merely says with mock solemnity, "Be careful how you ridicule things so venerable and sacred as these old ends."

249. may do me good, may help me.

250. thine to teach, ready to be taught by you.

255. affect her, are lovingly inclined towards her.

256. ended action, the campaign just finished.

259. than to . love, than would allow of liking being carried so far as to merit the name of love.

260. but now I am, etc., *i.e.* But now *that* I am, etc, ; see Abb. 284, and on *am* and *has* 295.

261. rooms, we should now say *room* or *place*.

263. all prompting...wars, all suggesting to me how fair Hero is, and reminding me that I liked her, etc. For the omission of the article before *wars,* see Abb. 90. Some editors, without improving matters, as it seems to me, mark an aposiopesis after *wars*.

266. book of words, with whole volumes of love - talk : cp. below, v. 2. 32, "a whole *book* full of these carpetmongers."

267. it, the love ; to be supplied from the verb.

268. break with her, "open the matter in conversation with her" (Abb. 194), sound her on the subject and so make it easier for you to declare your passion. Rolfe points out that the phrase, though used elsewhere by our author in this sense, is also used by him to mean "break faith with," as in *M. W.* iii. 2. 57, "we have appointed to dine with Mistress Ann, and I would not *break with her* for more money than I'll speak of."

270. to twist so fine a story. Walker, *Cr. Ex.* iii. 29, objects to *story*, and his editor, Mr. Lettsom, conjectures *string*. But surely there is no necessity for this : "to *weave* a tale" is a common expression.

272. his complexion ! *his*, the more ordinary genitive neuter of the period, see below, v. 2. 48. *Complexion* in Shakespeare's day meant external appearance, external indication of some internal feeling ; also natural disposition ; as well as the more restricted meaning, in which its use is now most common, of the colouring of the face.

274. I would...treatise. I would, is I had followed my own promptings, have made my declaration of love appear less abrupt, approaching the subject gradually in a lengthened conversation. *Salved*, excused, smoothed it over. *Treatise*, now used almost always of a written discourse, in Shakespeare's day meant also any long tale, conversation, etc. : cp. *Mach*. v. 5. 12.

275. what need, etc. On this phrase Abbott (297) observes, "The impersonal *needs* (which must be distinguished from the adverbial genitive *needs*) often drops the *s* ; partly, perhaps, because of the constant use of the noun need. It is often found with 'what,' where it is sometimes hard to say whether 'what' is an adverb and *need* a verb, or 'what' an adjective and *need* a noun.

'*What need* the bridge much broader than the flood ?'
M. Ado i. 1. 318.

Either '*why need* the bridge (be) broader?' or '*what need* is there (that) the bridge (be) broader ?' "

276. the fairest...necessity. There seems no necessity to change '*the necessity* ' into '*to necessity*' as has been proposed. 'To grant what is necessary' (the necessity) is the fairest grant that can be made,' is evidently the meaning, and is almost identical with "what will serve is fit."

277. 'tis once thou lovest, see Add. 57. Staunton says that here, as in *C. of E.* iii. l. 89, and *Cor*. ii. 3. l, the expression is equivalent to 'For the nonce, for the occasion.' Schmidt (*Lex.*) renders it here, 'It is a fact past help.' 'Once for all' is perhaps the nearest modern equivalent. Don Pedro briefly sums up the case, 'Enough has been said : you admit that you love her, and that being so, I will,' etc.

278. fit thee with, furnish you with.

280. I will assume thy part, etc. "Where is this spoken ? In the next scene Antonio tells Leonato that a servant of his had overheard the conversation in an alley in his orchard ; and in the *next* scene Borachio tells John that *he* had overheard it from behind and arras in the house. Are we to suppose on interval of time between the first and second scene of this act ? Or were there two conversations between the Prince and Claudio on this subject ? Or is it one of those instances of the poet's carelessness in the minor parts of his plot to which reference has already been made in *M. N. D.* p. 122 and *Ham*. p. 241 ?" (Rolfe).

282. unclasp my heart, show her my feelings *as Claudio*.

284. stormy encounter, vigorous attack.

285. after, later on.

287. presently, see above, l. 71.

Scene II.

1. cousin, really 'nephew' ; but in Shakespeare's day the word was used almost as an equivalent to *kinsman* : nephews, hieces, uncles, brothers-in-law, and even grandchildren, being included among its senses : a contraction of Lat. *consobrinus*, the child of a mother's sister.

2. **this music**, this band or "consort" of musicians of which we were speaking.

4. **yet**, see Abb. 347.

5. **are they good** ? Shakespeare uses both *news* and *tidings* indifferently as singular or as plural.

8. **thick-pleached alley**, densely interwoven walk : below, iii. 1. 7, we have the simple word, as also in *A. C.* iv. 4. 73.

orchard (*ort-geard*, yard of worts or vegetables),=garden, as usually, if not always, in Shakespeare : the word was at one time written *Hortgard* under the mistaken notion that it was derived from *hortus*, which singularly enough is said to be related to the *latter* syllable, *yard*.

9. **thus much**, so far.

10. **discovered**, revealed.

12. **by the top**, to take time by the forelock ; in reference to the old presentment of Time as having a lock of hair in front and being bald behind. Cp. Bacon, *Essay* xxi., "For *occasion* (as it is in the common verse) *turneth a bald noddle after she hath presented her locks in front, and no hold taken*."

14. **wit**, good sense.

15. **good sharp**, fairly intelligent.

and question, etc., and *do you* question, etc. : cp. below, v. 1, 279, v. 2. 27.

17. **appear itself**. Abbott (296) is inclined to think that the verb is here used reflectively. "In reality," says Delius, "as contrasted with a dream." Dyce conjectures *approve*, i.e. 'prove,' and says that in *Cor.* iv. 3. 9 the folio has "*appear'd*" where the sense requires *approv'd*.

18. **withal**, with this, as frequently in Shakespeare, who also uses the word in the more common (modern) sense of "moreover," and as a prep.=with.

20. **go you...of it**. He seems to change his mind, and delegates the task to Antonio, as being too busy himself.

cousin. This is Dyce's reading. His note is, "Here the old eds. have 'coosins,' and, two lines after, 'cosin' ; but Leonato is evidently addressing the same individual ; and his first speech in this scene shows plainly *who* that individual is—'Where is *my cousin*, *your son* ? hath he provided this music ?' The said 'cousin,' son to Antonio, now crosses the stage along with musicians, and, it may be, with others." Steevens, who with most editors retains the plural says, "*cousins* were anciently among the dependants, if not the domestics, of great families, such as that of Leonato. Petruchio, while intent on the subjection of Katharine [*T. S.* iv. 1. 54, 'And bid my cousin Ferdinand come hither'] calls out, in terms imperative, for his *cousin Ferdinand*."

21. **I cry...friend**. I beg your pardon ; excuse me ; merely a polite form of address.

22. **use your skill**, make use of your advice and help.

Scene III.

1. **what the good-year.** An imprecation, sometimes used in a good-humoured way, of which neither the origin nor meaning has been certainly discovered. Furness says, 'It was evidently a good mouth-filling oath, which was not dangerous, in that it had lost all meaning. While it became obsolete, its twin brother in obscurity, "What the dickens," also used by Shakespeare, has survived.'

3. **that breeds,** sc. *it*, which word was inserted by Theobald and is the reading of many modern editions.

10. **born under Saturn,** when Satern was predominant : hence saturnine, morose. On words of this class Trench (*The Study of Words*. p. 170, 17th edition) remarks, "No one now puts any faith in astrology, or counts that the planet under which a man is born will affect his temperament, make him for life of a disposition grave or gay, lively or severe. Yet our language affirms as much ; for we speak of men as 'jovial' or 'saturnine' or 'mercurial'—'jovial' as being born under the planet Jupiter or Jove, which was the joyfullest star, and of happiest augury of all : a gloomy, severe person is said to be 'saturnine,' born, that is, under the planet Saturn, who makes those that own his influence, being born when he was in the ascendant, grave and stern as himself : another we call 'mercurial,' or light-headed, as those born under the planet Mercury were accounted to be. The same faith in the influence of the stars survives in 'dis-astrous,' 'ill-starred,' 'ascendancey,' 'lord of the ascendant,' and. indeed, in 'influence' itself."

goest about, busiest yourself in applying.

11. **mortifying,** deadly, killing. In *Mach*. v. 2, 5, "the mortified man " is the dead man, and the refrence to the trial by ordeal ; in *J. C.* ii. 1. 324, "my *mortfied* spirit" means 'deadened spirit.' Here the word is probadly used for the sake of the alliteration.

I cannot hide, etc. Johnson remarks, " This is one of our author's natural touches. An envious and unsocial mind, too proud to give pleasure, and too sullen to receive it, always endeavours to hide its malignity from the world and from itself under the plainness of simple honesty, or the dignity of haughty independence." In *Lear* ii. 2. 101-10, the disguised Kent is accused of knavery for affecting a bluntness of manner—

"This is some fellow,
Who, having been praised for bluntness, doth affect
A saucy roughness, and constrains the garb
Quite from his nature : he cannot flatter, he,
An honest mind and plain, he must speak truth !
An they will take it, so ; if not, he's plain.
These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness
Harbour more craft and more corrupter ends
Than twenty silly ducking observants
That stretch their duties nicely."

13. **stomach,** appetite, as commonly in Shakespeare, whether literally or metaphorically. Other metaphorical meanings of the word in our author are anger, courage, pride.

15. claw, flatter.

in his humour means in his capricious moods, and is almost equivalent to our 'out of humour.' So Shakespeare uses the adj. *humorous* for capricious, perverse.

17. **controlment**, *re*straint, rather *con*straint than as Rolfe explains it, the hindrance or compulsion being from without.

stood out, been a rebel against, been in opposition to. See i. 1. 156-7, and for the phrase cp. *R. II*. i. 4. 38—

"Now for the rebels which *stand out* in Ireland,
Expedient manage must be made."

20. **but by...yourself**, unless you make fair weather for yourself, *i. e.* adapt yourself to his moods and caprices.

22. **I had rather grace**, 'canker'=dog-rose, wild-rose, as in 1 *H. IV*. i. 3. 176. "I had rather be a neglected dog-rose in a hedge, than a garden-flower of the same species, if it profited by his culture" (Steevens). When regard to Conrade's words above, Malone quotes *Macb*. i. 4. 28-9—

"Welcome thither,
I have begun to plant thee and will labour
To make thee full of growing".

23. **blood**, disposition, nature, as frequently in Shakespeare.

24. **than to fashion...any**, than so to shape my manner as to steal the love of a single person. *Carriage* in the sense of 'bearing,' 'deportment,' though somewhat old-fashioned, is still in use.

in this . . . villain. In this respect, though I cannot be credited with the character of an honest man somewhat given to flattery, yet no one has any right to deny that, if a villain, I am at all events a plain-dealing one. Abbott (122) says that *but* is here used transitionally, *i. e.* in a sense between the preventive and the adversative. Possibly, however, there is a slight confusion due to the excessive negative in *denied*. If Shakespeare had written, 'It must not be *said* but I am,' etc., the sense would have been plain.

26. **I am trusted . . . cage**, 'they show perfect trust in me,—yes by putting a muzzle on me like a dangerous dog ; they give me perfect freedom,—yes, by fettering me with a clog, like an animal they are afraid will run away : so, like a caged bird, I am determined I will not sing to please them.'

28. **If I had . . . liking**, if I had my mouth free, were not "trusted with a muzzle," I would, etc. : if I had my liberty, were not "enfranchised with a clog," I would etc.

32. **for I use it only**, "*i. e.* for I make nothing else my counsellor" (Steevens).

Stage Direction. Enter Borachio. Comp. Middleton, *The Spanish Gipsy* i. 1. 6, "I am no *borachio* ; sack, malaga, nor canary breeds the calenture in my brains ; mine eye mads me, not my cups," where Bullen notes, "Drunkard. Literally, a Spanish term for a bottle, made of skins."

35. **I came**, the aorist for the perfect ; the action being regarded simply as past without reference to the present or to completion.

38. **model**, plan, design. So in *2 H. IV.* i. 3. 42, 46, 51, and *R. III.* v. 3. 24.

39. **what is he for a fool**, etc. "This construction," says Staunton, "though no longer permissible, was trite enough in the poet's time. The meaning is, *what kind of fool is he* ?" and he quotes from Peele's *Edw.* I. sc. 2, "What's he for a man ?" Ben Jonson. *E. M. O. H. H.* iii. 6, "What is he for a creature ?" and *Ram Alley* iv. 2, "What is he for a man ? Nothing for a man, but much for a beast." Middleton uses the phrase repeatedly, e. g. *The Widow* ii. 2. 159, *Anything for a Quiet Life* ii. 2. 233, *The Family of Love* ii. 4. 108, *A Mad World*, etc., v. 2. 271. Abbott (148) points out that the expression is "more intelligible when the order is changed : 'For a fool, what is he, *i. e.* considered as a fool—it being granted that he is a fool—what kind of a fool is he ?'"

41. **marry**, *i. e.* by the Virgin Mary, an oath frequent in our author's day, though concealed in form in order to evade the statute against profane swearing.

right hand, trustiest follower and help.

44. **a proper squire** ! *Proper* in the sense of "fine," whether ironical, as here, or seriously meant, is common in Shakespeare of both persons and things. *Squire*, besides its senses of "a gentleman next in rank to a knight" and of "an attendant on a noble warrior or on a royal person," is used by Shakespeare as "a familiar title, given sometimes in tenderness and sometimes" (as here) "in contempt ; almost=fellow" (Schmidt, *Lexicon*).

and who, and who ? Walker, *Crit Ex.*, etc., vol. iii. p. 29, quotes four passages from Shirley to show that such repetitions were common : who is the object of his love, or, as he goes on to say, "which way looks he ?" *i. e.* whom has he in his eye for a wife ? on whom are his looks of love turned ?

47. **a very forward March-chick** ! Said contemptuously of his precocity in thinking of marriage while still so young, the early spring in England being too cold as a rule for the rearing of chickens.

49. **entertained**, engaged, hired : cp. *Lear* iii. 6. 83.

as I was smoking, etc. "The neglect of cleanliness, says Steevens, "among our ancestors rendered such precautions too often necessary." Among other passages he quotes Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, edit, 1632, p. 261, "The smoake of juniper is in great request with us at Oxford to *sweeten* our chambers."

50. **comes me** : for the inflexion in *s* preceding a plural subject see Abb. 335, and for *me* here and two lines lower down, 220, though in the second of the two instances the pronoun is used reflexively.

51. **sad**, serious, as not uncommonly in Shakespeare : cp. below, ii. 3. 229.

arras, tapestry for hanging rooms, called by the name of the place, Arras in Provence, at which they were most commonly made. Shakespeare frequently notes the use that was made of them as places of concealment. For words similarly derived see Trench, *The Study of Words*, pp. 153 *et seqq.*

55. may prove...displeasure, may minister opportunity for exercising the malice I bear to Claudio.

56. start up, =the modern *up-start*, which Shakespeare uses in this sense as an adj. only, *R. II.* ii. 3. 122. *Start-up* is in use in other dramatists, *e. g.* Middleton, *Women beware Women* iv. 1. III, 'A poor, base *start-up*."

hath...overthorw, I owe it entirely to his interference that I fell into my brother's displeasure.

57. cross...bless, though *cross* here is of course primarily to thwart, hinder, yet the use of the word *bless* immediately afterwards suggests an allusion to the making of the sign of the cross, as by a priest when blessing, or by a layman when endeavouring to avert a danger, a curse, etc. Cp. *C. E.* ii. 2. 190.

58, sure, to be relied upon, trustworthy.

60. great supper, the great supper mentioned by Borachio above, l. 35, but here of course spoken of scornfully : that supper which they enjoy all the more because I have been disgraced,—a piece of egotism which at the same time shows the malignant nature of Don John, he attributing to others the feelings which would have been his if in their place.

61. would...mind ! *i, e.* for then he would poison the whole company.

ACT II. Scene 1.

3. how tratly...after, "The pain commonly called the *heart-burn* proceeds from an *acid* humour in the stomach, and is therefore properly enough imputed to *tart* (*i. e.*, sour) looks" (Johnson). Rolfe compares 1 *H. IV.* iii. 3. 59. *An hour after, i. e. for* an hour after.

6. in the midway, as we should now say,' midway between.'

8. my lady's eldest son, no particular lady is here meant, *my lady's* being used generically ; like some fine lady's pet son, a house-bred lad, his mother's spoilt darling.

15. If a' could get her good will is of course an unexpected close to the sentence, almost nullifying the previous clause. *a*' for *he*, a contraction produced by rapidity of speech ; similarly '*am* 'and *em* for them.

17. shrewd, curst, bitter : originally the past participle of *shrewen*, to curse. "As it is in words that ill-temper finds the readiest and most frequent vent, the terms *curst*, and *shrewd*, and *shrew*, and *shrewsh* are often used with a special reference to the tongue. But sharpness of tongue, again, always implies some sharpness of under-standing as well as of temper. The terms *shrewd* and *shrewdly* accordingly have come to convey usually something of both of these qualities,—at one time, perhaps, most of the one, at another of the other. The sort of ability that we call *shrewdness* never suggests the notion of anything very high : the word has always a touch in it of the sarcastic or disparaging. But, on the other hand the disparage-ment which it expresses is never without an admission of some thing also that is creditable or flattering. Hence it has come to pass that a person does not hesitate to use the terms in question even of him-self and his own judgements or conjectures. We say, 'I shrewdly suspect or guess,' or 'I have a shrewd guess or suspicion,' taking the

liberty of thus ascribing or assuming our own intellectual acumen under cover of the modest confession at the same time of some little illnature in the exercise of it. Even when *shrewd* is used without any personal reference, the sharpness which it implies is generally, if not always, a more or less unpleasant sharpness. 'This last day was a shrewd one to us,' says one of the soldiers of Octavius to his comrade, in *Antony and Cleopatra* iv. 9. [5], after the encounter in which they had been driven back by Antony near Alexandria. *Shrewdness* is even used by Chaucer in the sense of evil generally ; as in *The House of Fame* iii. 537—

'Speke of hem harm and shreuednesse
Instead of gode and worthinesse.'

And so too Bacon—'An ant is a wise creature for itself ; but it is a shrewd thing in an orchard or garden.' Essay 23, 'Of Wisdom for a Man's Self'" (Craik, *The English of Shakespeare*, § 186.

18. I shall...way ; I shall limit God's gifts in that respect ; for as she goes on to explain, God will send her no husband, and therefore no horns.

22. just, if he...evening. Exactly so, if he send me no husband ; and that he may grant me that blessing I pray to him morning and evening.

24. I could not...woollen. To lie next a husband who had a beard would be as bad as lying between the blankets, without any sheets, as Steevens explains the phrase "in the woollen."

33. I will even...hell, rather than that such fate should be mine, I would even bind myself to a bear-leader, by taking sixpence as a handsel or pledge to lead his apes into hell. This last phrase in conncetion with old maids has never been satisfactorily, explained. Malone remerks, on *T. of S.* ii. 34, "'To lead apes' was in our author's time, as at present, one of the employments of a bear-ward who often carries about one of those animals along with his bear ; but I know not how this phrase came to be applied to old maids." Steevens, "That women who refused to bear children should, after death, be condemned to the care of apes in leading strings, might have been considered as an act of posthumous retribution." Delius quotes The *London Prodigal*, a play once attributed to Shakespeare, "Women dying maids lead apes in hell." On the form *bear-herd*, Schmidt (*Lexicon*) observes, "This is the Shakespearian form of the word : cp. *Shr*. Ind. 2. 21 and H. 4 B. i. 2. 192 ; the other passages have *berrord*, *berard*, and *bearard*, but never *bear-ward*, as some M. Edd. choose to write."

35. but, only.

40. to Saint Peter for the heavens. The quarto and the folios all read "to Saint Peter : for the heavens he," etc., where 'for the heavens' would be a petty oath. Pope made the change in the punctuation which is adopted by most modern editors, and seems to give the better sense : *i. e.* to be conducted by him into heaven. The plural form is frequent in Shakespeare.

45. make curtsy, a contracted form of *courtesy*, which differs from it in meaning only that *curtsy* is appropriated to the low bow

made by women, the outward expression of courteous feeling.

please, subjunctive.

49. **fitted with**, mated with a suitable husband, one who understands how to treat you.

53. **a piece of ... marl**, cp. *Haml.* v. 1. 224-239.

55. **to match in my kindred.** To marry with those so closely related to me, of a nearer degree of relationship than is permitted by the Church.

58. **in that kind**, in that way, with reference to marriage.

60. **in good time**, with a double sense, that of keeping good time in music, and that of doing a thing at the right moment.

important, importunate, as elsewhere in Shakespeare.

measure, proper degree moderation ; and, as the words "so dance out your answer" show, with an allusion to another meaning of the word, a stately kind of dance "with slow and measured steps like the minuet ; and therefore described as 'full of state and ancientry'" [the port and behaviour of old age] (Singer). For the pun, Steevens compares *R. II*, iii. 4. 7.

> "My legs can keep no *measure* in delight
> When my poor heart no *measure* keeps in grief."

63. **Scotch jig**, probably here a Scotch *reel*, a Highland dance of a lively character.

66. **bad legs**, tottering legs.

cinque-pace, "a dance, the steps of which were regulated by the number five" [cinque] (Dyce, *Gloss*) : another name for it was a *galliard*. Middleton, *Women beware Women* iii. 2. 215-218 says,

> "Plain men dance the measures ; the sinquapace, the gay ;
> Cuckolds dance the hornpipe, and farmers dance the hay ;
> Your soldiers dance the round, and maidens that grow big;
> Your drunkards, the canaries ; your whore and bawd, the jig."

In his play *More Dissemblers besides Women* Sinquapace is the name of the dancing master. After the word 'sink' in l. 67 Collier's MS. Corrector would add 'apace,' *i. e.* swiftly, which conjecture, say the Camb. Edd., "seems to have suggested itself independently to Capell (Notes, vol. ii. p. 121)," and "is supported by a passage in Marston's *Insatiate Countesse*, act ii. [i. 88],

> 'Thinke of me as of the man
> Whose dancing days you see are not yet done.
> *Len.* Yet you *sinke a pace*, sir.' "

69. **passing shrewdly**, exceedingly ; keenly : *passing* for surpassingly as an adv, is frequent in Shakespeare.

70. **I can see ... daylight.** Said of course with her usual merry irony : cp. *Haml.* ii. 2. 397, "I am but mad north-north-west : when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw."

72. **make good room**, stand aside and give them plenty of room to enter.

73. **friend**, used in Shakespeare's day for a lover, of either sex.

74. **so you walk**, provided you walk.

75. **I am yours for the walk**, etc., I am ready to walk with you,

and most ready to walk when it is to walk away from you: cp. below, v. 2. 39.

78. I may...please; *i.e.* I have never said so, whatever you may choose to think.

80. favour, look, appearance. "'In beauty,' says Bacon in his 43rd Essay, 'that of favour is more than that of colour; and that of decent and gracious motion more than that of favour.' The word is now lost to us in that sense: but we still use *favoured* with *well, ill*, and perhaps other qualifying terms, for featured or looking; as in *Gen.* xli. 4:—'The ill-favoured and lean-fleshed kine did eat up the seven well-favoured and fat kine,' *Favour* seems to be used for *face* from the same confusion or natural transference of meaning between the expressions for the feeling in the mind and the outward indication of it in the look that has led to the word *countenance*, which commonly denotes the latter, being sometimes employed, by a process the reverse of what we have in the case of *favour*, in the sense of at least one modification of the former; as when we speak of anyone giving something his *countenance*, or *countenancing it*" (Craik, *E. of Shakespeare*, § 54).

for God...case! for God forbid that your face should be no better than your mask; *defend* in this sense (the Fr. *defendre*) is common in Shakespeare, and occurs again below, iv. 2. 21.

82. my visor...Jove. The story of Baucis and Philemon, told by Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 8. 630 *et seqq.*, and translated in Shakespeare's day by Golding, is referred to; and Staunton points out that our author obviously intended to form a couplet in the long fourteen-syllable verse employed by that translator:—

> *Don P.* "My visor is Philemon's roof; within the house is Jove.
> *Hero.* Why then your visor shouln be match'd.
> *Dod P.* Speak low, if yo speak love."

89. which is one? 'which' is a contracted form of *hwilic*, instrumental case of *hwa*, who, and *lic*, like, *i.e.* of what kind? Rolfe remarks that we should now say, "*What* is one?" but either expression would be correct, though we more commonly use *which* in such cases when an alternative is to be expressed.

91. I love you, etc., *i.e.* that is no fault at all, but a good custom, for the hearers may benefit by taking part in your prayers so far at all events as saying "Amen" to them.

95. clerk, the reader of the responses in the English Church service; suggested, as Rolfe points out, by Balthazar's 'Amen.' Cp. *Sonn.* 85. 6. "And like unletter'd *clerk* still cry 'Amen' ": *R. II.* iv. 173, "Am I both priest and *clerk*? Well, then, Amen."

96. the clerk is answered, *i.e.* your severe words have made me dumb.

98. at a word, in a word, plainly.

101. you could...man, you could never imitate him so perfectly in his bad habit, unless you were he himself. Steevens compares *M. of V.* i. 2. 63, "He hath a *better bad* habit of frowning than the Count Palatine."

102. here's his...down, that is exactly the way in which he

moves his hand : *up and down*, exactly, for all the world, from head to foot ; cp. *Tit And.* v. 2. 107, "For *up and down* she doth resemble thee"; and Middleton, *A Chaste Maid*, etc., iii. 2. 13," The mother's mouth *up and down, up and down.*" A *dry hand* was formerly regarded as the sign of a cold disposition, as was a moist hand of a wanton one. To the former Maria alludes in *T. N.* i. 3. 77.

106. can virtue...itself ? *i.e.* such an excellent quality as your wit *will* show itself, however much one may try to conceal it.

go to, a form of exhortation, sometimes in the way of encouragement, but more often with a scornful force.

107. and there's an end, or, as we still say, 'and there's an end *of it*' : there is nothing more to be said on the subject.

108. told you so, *i.e.* that I was disdainful.

110. nor will you not, for the double negative see Abb. 406.

113. the **'Hundred Merry Tales'** : "Of this popular old jest book, printed by John Rastell, 1517-1533, a fragment, containing nearly all the tales, was fortunately discovered by the Rev. J. J. Conybeare some years ago, and has been carefully reprinted by Mr. Singer, under the title of 'Shakespeare's Jest Book.' The stories thus reserved from oblivion are so sadly deficient in point, and sometimes in decency also, that Beatrice might well resent the imputation of having derived her wit from such a source" (Staunton).

115. what's he ? see above, i. 1, 29.

120. a very dull fool ; the terms 'fool' and 'jester' were employed indifferently for the professional maker of jokes at the courts of princes.

121. only his gift, *i.e.* his only gift'; see Abb. 420.

impossible : see note on. l. 218 below.

123. villany, "by which she means his malice and impiety. By his impious jests, she insinuates, he *pleased* libertines ; and by his *devising slanders* of them, he angered them" (Warburton).

124. I am sure...me, I am sure he is among this company (we use *host, troop, crew,* in the same vague way), and I wish he had accosted me. To *board,* in this sense, is frequent in Shakespeare, but is used here specially with reference to *fleet*.

128. break a comparison...on me ; cp. below, ii. 3. 211, "I may chance have some odd *quirks and remnants of wit broken on me,* and v. l. 178, "you *break jests* as braggarts do their blades": the origin of the phrase being from breaking a stick, sword, etc., upon some one, *i.e.* while beating him.

130. there's a partridge wing saved. Halliwell says that the wing of the partridge was formerly considered the most delicate part of the bird, as, indeed, it still is ; but the jest turns not upon the saving of the best part of the bird, but upon the effeminacy of Benedick's appetite, for whose supper such a trifle was sufficient.

132. the leaders, *i.e.* of the dance, there being in the intricate dances of the time, as later on in the minuet and cotillon, special persons appointed for this duty.

134. at the next turning, the next time they turn and come down the room, but with a reference the commoner sense of the phrase, *i.e.* the next bend in the road.

136. **amorous on,** 'amorous' with a preposition is a rare expression nowadays, and 'of' would be used instead of 'on' ; so, just below, 'enamoured *on*' would now be 'enamoured *of*, or *with*.

137. **to break with him,** see above, i. 1. 268.

138. **one visor,** on masked person.

142. **near,** in his confidence. Staunton compares 2. *H. IV*. v. 1. 81, "If I had a suit to Master Shallow, I would humour his men with the imputation of being *near* their master."

144. **equal for,** *i.e.* in respect of birth.

152. **news,** see above, i. 2. 4.

155. **office,** business, employment.

156. **use,** *i.e.* let them use : see Abb. 365.

159. **against whose,** *i.e.* held opposite to which ; as anything held opposite to the fire.

blood, passion, as below, ii. 3. 147.

160. **of monthly proof,** which is being constantly demonstrated.

161. **which...not,** *i.e.* which I ought to have expected, but foolishly did not. "*Ed* followed by *d* or *t* is often not written...and when written, often not pronounced," Abb. 472, who includes *mistrusted* here among his examples. But it is possible that the line should be read.

Which I' | mistrust | ed not ; | farewell | therefore, | Hero, *i.e.* either a genuine Alexandrine with the pause fully marked after the third foot, or what Abbott calls an apparent Alexandrine, but really a regular verse of five accents followed by an isolated foot (Hero) containing one accent. On the subject of Alexandrines in Shakespeare see Ellis, *Early English Pronunciation*, pp. 943-6.

165. **willow,** an emblem of unhappy love : frequently referred to by Shakespeare. The tree, called from its drooping branches the 'weeping' willow, is still planted in English churchyards over tombstones. Rolfe, among other illustrations from literature contemporary with Shakespeare, quotes from Fuller's *Worthies*, "a sad tree, whereof such who have lost their love make their mourning garlands, and we know what exiles hang up their harps upon such doleful supporters," where the reference is to the Jews in captivity, "We hanged our harps upon the *willows* in the midst thereof, "*Psalms* cxxxvii. 2.

167. **county,** another form of 'count,' several times used by Shakespeare ; originally meaning a companion, *i.e.* of some great leader, the modern 'county'=shire being the portion of territory of which the count had the government.

168. **usurer's chain.** "Chains of gold, of considerable value, were in our author's time usually worn by wealthy citizens and others in the same manner as they now are on public occasions" [such as the procession through the city on Lord Mayor's day] "by the aldermen of London." (Reed). Cp Middleton. *Anything for a Quiet Life* iii. 2. 224-5, "But because you are a rich citizen, you will have your *chain* about your neck." Steevens and Malone point out that about this time usury was a common topic of invective.

169. **lieutenant's scarf**, which passed over the right shoulder and under the left arm.

one way, *i.e.* one way or another.

172. **drovier**. Dyce gives *drover*, the modern form, but *drovier* is the reading of the quarto and the folios.

so they sell bullocks, *i. e.* with such a commendation.

176. **ho, now you strike**, etc., *i. e.*, it is the duke you ought to be angry with, not me.

178. **If it will not be**, *i. e.* that you will leave me. See Abb. 321.

179. **into sedges**, into the sedges, as we should now say, like a wounded wild-fowl seeking to escape the sportsman.

181. **go under**, am known by : cp. *A. W.* iii. 5. 22, "All these engines of lust are not the things they *go under*."

180. **but so I am apt**, etc., but in believing that I am frequently spoken of as a fool, I show myself too ready (apt) to do myself an injustice ; I will *not* believe that I have this reputation. On the words, "so *apt* to die," *J. C.* iii. 1. 160, Craik remarks, "*Apt* is properly fit or suited, generally, as here. So formerly they said *to apt* in the sense both of to adapt and of to agree. I apprehend, however, as *apt to die* (for ready or prepared to die) would have been felt in any stage of the language to involve an unusual extension of the meaning of the word, sounding about as strange as *aptus ad moriendum* would do in Latin. We now, at all events, commonly understand the kind of suitableness or readiness implied in *apt* as being only that which consists in inclination, or addictedness, or mere liability. Indeed, we usually say *disposed* or *inclined* in cases in which *apt* was the customary word in the English of the last century ; as in Smollett's *Count Fathom*, vol. ii. ch. 27, 'I am apt to believe in the voice of heaven.' By the substantive *aptitude*, again, we mostly understand an active fitness."

183. **it is the base**, etc., there being nothing adversative between *base* and *bitter*, Johnson changed *though* into *the*, which might easily have passed into the contracted form *tho*.' Others have suggested *bare* for *base*, and *tough for though*. Singer suggests, "Though Beatrice is so bitterly disposed towards me, she does not reflect upon me directly, but contrives with her bitterness the baseness of circulating her own slanders as the common report of the world." Walker (*Crit. Exam., etc.*, iii. p. 30) seems to see in *bitter* a pun upon the name Beatrice, of which there was an English form *Bettris*.

184. **that puts...out**, "assumes to represent the world, and thus reports me. For *gives me out* cf. *A. W*, ii. 3. 16, 'that gave him out incurable,' etc." (Rolfe).

185. **as I may**, in any way that I can.

189. **have played the part of Lady Fame**, have told him what was currently reported. See Rumour's description of herself in the Induction to 2 *H. IV*.

190. **as a lodge in a warren** : 'warren' originally a preserve for rabbits, hares, or fish : *lodge*, the keeper's house in it. Steevens remarks, "A parallel thought occurs in the first chapter of *Isaiah*,

where the prophet, describing the desolation of Judah, says, 'The daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a *lodge* in a garden of cucambers,' " etc, But in the abandonment of those *lodges* when the cucumbers had grown, there is no parallel to the present passage where the loneliness of the *lodge* is due only to its being out of the way of other buildings, in places frequented by rabbits, hares, etc.

192. had got the good wish, won the love. Walker would read '*his* young lady' for '*this*,' etc, Malone makes Hero and Leonato come in with Don Pedro. Dyce, however, points out that our early authors use *this* rather loosely.

193. to make him...to bind him, 'him' reflexively in both cases.

bind him up a rod, *i. e.* a brich rod made of several twigs bound up together.

197. flat transgression, downright folly. *That's flat* is still a colloquialism among the lower classes for 'That is plain, certain.'

201. wilt thou make, etc., will you construe simple faith into a fault ?

202. yet, *i. e.* even if it is not a fault.

206. I will but...owner, I do not mean to keep her for myself but, having taught her how to answer Claudio, to restore her to him.

them, the young birds in the nest.

208. if their...honestly, if her language to Claudio corresponds with what you promise for her, then I will admit that you have dealt fairly by him : if she accepts Claudio, I shall believe what you say as to your intentions.

210. a quarrel to you, a complaint, cause of quarrel, against you ; from the O. F. *querele*, Lat. *querela*, a complaint. For. *to* in this phrase, Rolfe compares *T. N.* iii. 2. 248, and *Cor.* iv. 5. 133.

211. much wronged by you, *i. e.* by what you had said of her : See above, 1, 108.

213. misused, abused, which word is frequently employed by Shakespeare in the modern sense of *misuse*, *i. e.* to treat badly.

214. with but one green leaf on it, *i. e.* with any life at all in it.

215. scold with her, return her taunts, her abuse.

216. not thinking...myself, though, of course, Beatrice knew all the while that she was talking to Benedick.

217. duller than etc., more gloomy than the weather in a heavy thaw when the skies are thick with clouds.

218. impossible, has been variously altered,—by Theobald (Warburton) to 'impassable,' by Hanmer to 'impetuous,' etc. "But Shakespeare, like other early writers, employs the word '*impossible*' with great license : so, before in this play [ii. 1. 121], we have '*impossible*' slanders' ; in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, act iii. sc. 5. [115], 'I will examine *impossible* places' ; in *Twelfth Night*, act iii. sc. 2. [76], '*impossible* passages of grossness : in *Julius Ceasear*, act iii. sc. 1. [325], 'strive with things *impossible*.' Walker (*Crit. Exam.*, etc., vol. iii. p. 30] cites from Drayton's Ode, *Love's Conquest*, 'S.' '*impossibly* I love you, etc." (*Dyce*).

conveyance is explained by Schmidt (*Lex.*) as "artful management, jugglery," and by Rolfe almost in the same sense. Perhaps

"dexterity" (Dyce) is the nearest modern equivalent.

220. **she speaks poniards,** cp. *Haml.* iii. 2. 414, and *K. John*, ii. 1. 462.

"He *speaks* plain cannon fire, and smoke and bounce."

221. **terminations**, explained by Dyce and others as "terms, words." Walker, on the ground that the folios read 'as terminations," (omitting *ter*) would read *minations*, *i. e.* threats; but though Shakespeare does not elsewhere use 'termination' in this sense, the previous 'words is in favour of it as against 'minations.'

224. **had left to him,** still possessed.

225. **have turned,** on the use by Shakespeare of the complete present indicative: see Abb. 360.

spit, *i.e.* '*the* spit,' unless, as seems possible, Shakspeare wrote 'turn turnspit.'

227. **the infernal Ate,** the Homeric goddess of discord: cp. *T. C.* iii. 1. 271, "With *Ate* by his side come hot from hell," and *K. John* ii. 63.

227. **I would...her.** "As Shakespeare always attributes to his *exorcists* the power of raising spirits, he gives his *conjurer*, in this place, the power of laying them" (Mason). *Scholar*, because Latin was used in exorcisms.

228. **for cetainly...sanctuary.** "That is to live in hell would be as quiet as to live in a sanctuary, compared to living where she is, and people sin on purpose in order to escape her in that way" (Rolfe). This seems a perfectly satisfactory explanation of a passage which Staunton calls "very ambiguous."

236. **toothpicker,** *i.e.* toothpick. For the use of the toothpick as evidence of a man having travelled see *K. John* i. 1. 190.

237. **Prester John's foot.** "Prester or Presbyter John was a mythical Christian King of India. Some placed his dominions in Abyssinia; Sir John Mandeville locates them in an island called Pentexoire. The difficulty of getting access to him is referred to in *Hudibras*:—

'While like the mighty Prester John,
Whose person none dares look upon,
But is preserved in close disguise
From being made cheap to vulgar eyes.'

The great Cham was the Khan of Tartary. He is associated with Prester John in the old drama of *Fortunatus*:—

'And then I'll revel it with Prester John,
Or banquet with great Cham of Tartary'" (Rolfe).

Cp. *The Spanish Gipsy* ii. 1. 259, "Kill the great Turk, pluck out the Mogul's eye-teeth;" where Bullen quotes Cartwright's *Siege* (Works, 1651, p. 157):—

"Fetch you a hair of the great Cham's beard!
No more? I'd thought you have bid me pull
The Parthian King by the beard, or draw an eye-tooth
From the jaw royal of the Persian monarch."

238. **the Pigmies,** "A race of dwarfs fabled to dwell beyond Mount Imaus in India. Their wars with the cranes are celebrated in a poem ascribed to Homer. Cf. Milton, *P. L.* i. 575:—

'That small infantry.
Warr'd on by cranes ;' -

and *Id*, i. 781,

'Like that Pygmaean race
Beyond the Indian mount' " (Rolfe).

239. this harpy, who would be as ready to tear one's face with her nails as the harpies to clutch at food with their claws.

241. **none...company**, none, except to hope that you will continue to give us the pleasure of your company ; which invitation Benedick, in order to escape Beatrice, hastily declines, and leaves the hall.

243. Lady Tongue, this lady who is all tongue : with a reference to his use of *dish* in the previous line, the tongue of oxen being a favourite dish, *i.e.* article of food, in Europe.

246. indeed...lost it. This passage, which is ambiguous, and pehaps intentionally so, is passed over by all the commentators. Its meaning seems to be this :—Beatrice admits that she once had Benedick's heart, though only as a loan : but, she says, she had given it back to him with interest, her own heart as well as his (with a quibble on the word *double*, *i.e.* deceitful). She goes on, Your grace may well say I have lost it, *i.e.* this double heart, for my part in it he won by false pretences. *Use* for interest is very frequent in Shakespeare and his contemporaries.

252. have put him down, have overthrown him, a metaphor from wrestling. So Rosalind, *A. Y. L.* i. 2. 266, in reference to Orlando's victory in the wrestling match, when by his courage and bearing he had won her heart, says—

"Sir, you have wrestled well, and overthrown
More than your enemies."

260. civil as an orange. "A '*civil* (not a *Seville*) orange ' was the usual orthography of the time : Aigre-douce [bitter-sweet]. '*A civle orange*,' Cotgrave's Fr. and Eng. Dict." (Dixe.) *Civil* here seems to mean, neither one thing nor the other, neither sad nor merry, neither sick nor well, but like the Seville orange (which is both bitter and sweet) something between the two, a mixture of both : *civil* being perhaps used with much the same sense as politic. Jacques' definition (*A. Y. L.* iv. 1. 10-15) of the different kinds of melahcholy seems to illustrate this passage :— "I have neither the scholar's melancholy, which is emulation, nor the musician's, which is fantastical, nor the courtier's, which is proud, nor the lawyer's, which is politic, nor the lady's, which is nice, *nor the lover's which is all these*."

261. jealous complexion, in refernce to the yellow rind of the orange, yellow (or green) being the colour cf complexion especially looked upon as indicative of jealousy.

262. blazon, an heraldic term, from "F. *blason*, 'a coat of arms ; in the eleventh century a buckler, a shield; then a shield with a coat of arms of a knight painted on it ; lastly, towards the fifteenth century, the coats of arms themselves' " (Brachet quoted by Skeat, *s. v.*.). Hence the description of other things besides a coat of arms.

263. **conceit**, idea, belief.

264. **I have wooed**, etc. From here to the end of the speach looks like verse, Walker, indeed, thinks that the whole speac his perhaps "a kind of verse."

265. **broke with**, cp. i. 1. 285, "Then after to her father will I *break*" : though it is possible that there is here a side reference to the verb to *broke*, and the subs. a *broker*, in the sense of negotiation ; cp. below, 268, "his grace hath made the match."

267. **my fortunes**, all that is mine, she being his sole heir.

268. **all grace**, *i.e.* God : cp. *A. W.* ii. 1. 163, "The greatest *grace* lending grace."

270. **cue**, usually derived from the Fr. *queue*, a tail. According to Wedgwood, "The last words of the preceding speech prefixed to the speech of an actor to let him know when he is to come on to the stage. From the letter Q, by which it is marked....Minshen explains it somewhat differently : 'A *qu*, a term used among stage players, *a* Lat. *qualis*, *i.e.* at what manner of word the actors are to begin to speak, one after another hath done his speech' ... The Fr. term is *replique*." In *H. V.* iii. 6. 130, folios express the word by 'Q,' and in *Oth.* i. 2. 83, the first quarto by 'Qu.'

271. **herald**, *i.e.* interpreter, publisher of.

I were...much. Cp. *A. and C.* i. 1. 15, "There's beggary in the love that can be reckon'd."

272. **as you are mine**, etc., I am as entirely yours as you are mine.

273. **dote upon**, delight in even to excess.

274. **exchange**, probably that which I get in exchange, *i.e.* you.

278. **poor fool**: "This was formerly an expression of tenderness. See *King Lear* [v. 3. 305], 'And my *poor fool* is hanged' " [where Lear is speaking of Cordelia] (Malone).

279. **windy side of care**, on the side away from that on which care is blowing. Schmidt explains "so that care cannot scent and find it, as though 'care were a hound. Cp. *T.N.* iii. 4.181, Still you keep on the *windy side* of the law."

282. **good Lord, for alliance!** Steevens and Staunton explain this as a wish for a husband ; though, if so, Beatrice is speaking ironically. Malone supposes that she is referring to Claudio's use of word *cousin*, and that the sense is, 'Good Lord, here have I got a new kinsman by marriage.'

goes to the world, gets married: cp *A.W.* i. 3. 20, "If I may have your ladyship's good will *to go to world*, Isbel the woman and I will do as we may. Rolfe thinks "perhaps originally in distinction from going into the church, were celibacy was the rule." He also quotes *a woman of the world*-a married woman, *A.Y.L.* v. 3.5.

283. **am sunburnt**, tanned by the sun and so not likely to attract a man's love. Staunton compares *T. and C.* i. 3. 282, "The Grecian dames are *sunburnt* and not worth The splinter of a lance."

286. **getting**, *i.e.* begetting.

287. **ne'er**, not even one brother.

288. **if maid**, etc., if only it were possible for a girl like me to

get one of them as a husband.

290. for working days, *i.e.* keeping you for Sundays and holidays only, like a fine garment.

293. matter, *i.e.* that which is material, substantial, has something in it, *sense*, as often in Shakespeare.

301. I cry you mercy...pardon. See above, i. 2. 21 : here in excuse for leaving them.

303. element. Of the four elements out of which all created things were supposed to be formed, earth and water were the slower ones, fire and air the quicker ones; and melancholy is ascribed to earth : cp. *H. V.* iii. 7. 23.

306. unhappiness is commonly explained as 'mischievous tricks, roguery.' But this interpretation seems to spoil the point of the passage. Leonato has said that "she is never sad but when she sleeps and not *ever* sad then," *i.e.* she is never sad *for long* even in her sleep ; she may dream of sorrow for a few minutes, but will quickly wake herself with laughter. *Sad* is often no doubt, as in i. 1.55, equivalent to *serious*, but the word *melancholy* seems to show that here it is used in its more ordinary sense.

308. hear tell. Rolfe quotes Grant White on this expression:— This form of speech, which Shakespeare constantly puts into the mouth of personage of the highest rank, but which is now never heard in Old England, except perhaps in the remotest rural districts, is in common use in New England.

309. out of suit, *i.e.* courtship ; but probably with a quibble on non-suiting a plea and putting anybody out of court, in the legal sense of that phrase. 311. **were,** would be.

313. to go to church, *i.e.* to be married : 'to go to church' is to attend divine service : to go into the church is to take upon oneself the profession of a priest.

316. rites, possibly with a pun on *rites* and *rights.*

317. son, see note on iv. 1.20.

ajust seven night, exactly a week : for *just*, cp. "a *just* pound" *M. of V.* iv. 1, 327. *Seven-night*, which was also contracted into the form *se'nnight*, as *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 333, *Oth*. ii. 1. 77, has now dropped out of use, though we retain the analogous *fortnight*.

319. answer my mind, correspond with my wishes, be carried out with due pomp and ceremony.

320. breathing, delay ; we still use the word *breathing time, i. e.* time to take breath.

324. mountain of affection, merely hyperbolical for *very great* affection, Why doubt should be thrown on the genuiness of the reading, and why Steevens, though quoting such parallel phrases as "a mountain of vexation," etc., should call it an offence against grammar, it is not easy to see. *Mooting*, Johnson's conjecture, is one of the unhappiest ones made by that critic.

326. minister...direction. Nowadays we should rather say "lend me help in such a way as I shall direct you.

328. I am for you, I am ready to join with you in the plot.

329. watching, keeping awake.

532. **any modest office**, anything that a modest maiden may.

334. **unhopefullest**, by no means the worst.

336. **strain**, stock lineage; cp. *H. V.* ii, 4. 51. and *J. C.* v. 1. 59: the term is stil used of animals.

approved, proved.

honesty, honour : the Lation sense.

338. **your two helps**, the help of you two.

340. **quesy stomach**, fastidious taste.

343. **my dift**, that which I am driving at.

Scene II

1. **shall marry**, is to marry ; the matter has been settled.

3. **cross**, thwart, hinder,

5. **medicinable**, see Abb. 3.

I am sick...mine, I am made quite ill by my hatred towards him and anything that is likely to thwart his wishes will be in accord with mine.

displeasure to him, "cf· 'a quarrl *to* you,' in ii. 1. 213 [210] above. See also [Abbott's] *Gr* 186. We find displeasure *at*' in *Per.* i. 3. 21 and 'displeasure *against*' in *Temp.* iv. 1. 202,*A. Y. L.* i. 2, 90, and *A. W.* iv. 80." (Rolfe.)

12. **waiting gentlewoman**, an attendant something above an ordinary maid-servant, as the freedom in conversation permitted her by her mistress would show.

15. **any unseasonable instant**, any time in the night, however late.

appoint her, arrange with her, make an appointment with her.

17. **what life...marriage** ? cp. *Lear* iv. 6. 206, "Then there's *life* in it" ; and for a somewhat similar play on the word, *H. V.* iv. 2. 54-5

19. **temper**, mix so as to be efficacious : cp. *Gymb.* v. 5. 250.

22. **estimation**, just reputation, merit.

23. **stal**, harlot : cy. *Cymb.* i. 6. 105, etc.

24. **what proof**, etc., how shall I substantiate my words ?

25. **misuse**, mislead :

vex and *vexation* were formerly used in a much stronger sense than that of the present day, and meant to distress, harass, torment.

26. **look you for**, etc., do you desire any, etc.

28. **to despite**, for this verb we now use *spite*, though the subs, is common enough in the adverbial phrase 'in despite of,' or despite of.'

31. **intend**, pretend, as not uncommonly is Shakespeare.

32. as to be joined with *that* in l. 49 ; a zeal which has led you to this discovery.

35. **without trial**, without making trial, investigation.

36. **instances**. corroborative circumstances.

which shall...likelihood, which shall have all the appearance of truth in so far that they shall see me, etc.

38. **Claudo**. Theobald changed this to "Borachio," and he has been followed by some editors. Malone remarks in opposition to

Theobald, "Claudio would naturally be enraged to find his mistress Hero (for such he would imagine Margaret to be) address Borachio, or any other man, by his name, as he might suppose that she called him by the name of Claudio in consequence of a secret agreement between them, as a cover, in case she were overheard; and *he* would know, without a possiblity of error, that it was not Claudio with whome, in fact, she conversed." Knight further points out that the very expression "term me" shows that the speaker assumes that Margaret, by connivance, would call him by the name of Claudio.

42. **disloyalty**, untruthfulness in love, a wider sense than the word more usually bears, *i.e.* the want of fidelity to the sovereign: cp. *C. of E.* iii. 2. 11.

"Look sweet, speak fair, become *disloyalty*,
Apparel vice like virtue's harbinger."

that jealousy...overthrowu, that what would otherwise be regarded as mere suspicion will then be looked upon as something clearly established, and the preparations for the wedding will be at an end.

44. **grow this**, etc., let this plot have whatever result it may, I will not shrink from carrying it out to the end.

45. **in the working this**: we should now say either 'in the working *of* this' or 'in working this': see Abb. 373 (*a*) and (*b*).

46. **ducats**, "O. F. *ducat*. . . . Ital. *ducato*. ...Low Lation, *ducatus*, a duchy, So called because, when first coined in the duchy of Apulia (about A.D. 1140), they bore the legend 'Sit tibi, Christe, datus, quem tu regis, iste *ducatus*" (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*). The coin, which was both of silver and of gold, has varied in value at different times. Shakespeare makes it current not only it Italy, bus in Ephesus, Vienna, Denmark, and the frequent use of it in Elizabethan literature shows how widespread was the commerce of Venice in those days.

47. **be you...accusation**, *i.e.* if you do not allow your courage to fail you when you make the accusation, but adhere to it firmly, you will find that I on my part shall not be wanting in my cunning.

49. **presently**, at once; see above, i. 171.

Scene III.

3. **chamber, window**, the recess of the window of his bed-room.

4. **orched**, see above, i. 2.8.

5. **I am here already sir.** Probably only another way of saying, 'Consider it done already.'

8. **dedicates his behaviours**, *i.e.* wholly gives himself up in all his actions, gestures, etc., to love. Possibly a sarcastic imitation of the absurd euphuism which is satirized in *Love's Labour's Lost*. We no longer use 'behaviour' in the plural.

10. **argument**, subject matter. The word is used by Shake speare with various shades of kindred meaning.

12. **no music with him**, no music that was acceptable to him, nothing musical to his ears.

13. **table and pipe**, *i.e.* such instruments as were used with dancing and revelry rather than those used in war: *tabor*, a small drum, the modern form of the word being 'tambourine.'

14. **ten mile**, the distance of ten miles. Rolre quotes *Macb.* v.

5. 37, "within this three mile" : so in the *Temp.* i. 2. 53. we have 'twelve year,' and in i. 3. 296, 'fathom five'; in the *T. of S.* Induction 2. 115, 'fifteen year' ; in 1 *H. IV.* ii. 4.50, 'five year'; in 2 *H. IV.* iii. 2. 224, 'fifty-five year.' On the first of these passages Wright points out that "we still use *pound* and *stone* with plural numerals, as did Hamlet (iii. 2. 298), I' ll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound.' " In all these cases it will be observed that measurement weight, or amount is spoken of.

15. **armour**, *i.e.* suit of armour.

16. **carving the fashion**, designing the shape and style. The commentators refer to a plate in Borde's *Introduction of Knowledge*, in which an English gentelman is represented as naked, with a pair of of tailor's shears in one hand and a piece of cloth on his arm, with certain verses showing his perplexity as to what he should wear : also to Barnaby Riche's account of a *Fashion-monger*—"Here comes first the fashionmonger that spends his time in the contemplation of sutes."

doublet, an inner garment which served, so to speak, as a lining or double to the outer one. Fr. *double*, with dim. suffix—*et*. Here used generically for any garment.

18. **orthography** is altered by Dyce and others into *orthographer* or *orthographist:* but the abstract for the concrete seems more forcible here. Staunton and Rolfe justify the reading in the text by comparing *L.L.L.* i. 2. 190, "I am sure I shall turn *sonnet*,', *i.e.* sonneteer, into which some editors change the word.

his words . . . dishes : cp. *L. L. L.* v. 1. 39, 40, where Moth ridiculing the affected language of the schoolmaster and the fantastical Spaniard, says, "They have been at a great feast of languages and stolen the scraps, and Costard replies, "O they have lived long on the alms-basket of words."

19. **may I**, etc., *i.e.* is it possible that I should ever be so changed ?

22. **an oyster**, *i.e.* to anything in the world, fish or flesh.

24. **yet I am well**, yet I am in no ways affected by the fact, I am still fancy-free.

26. **come in my grace**, find favour with me. For *in*=into, see Abb. 159.

27. **or I' ll none**, *i.e.* of her have nothing to say to her.

28. **cheapen**, bid for her, try to purchase her : "cf. *Per.* iv. 6. 10, '*cheapen* a kiss of her.' In the Shropshire dialect *cheaper*=ask the price of. Cf. Heywood, *Edward IV.* : 'I see you come to cheap, and not to buy.' Palsgrave gives, 'I cheape, I demande the price of a thyng that I wolde bye." (Rolfe.)

29. **or come not**, or let her not come.

noble . . . angle. With a pun (frequent in Shakespeare, on the names of the coins, worth respectively 6s. 8d. and 10s.), 'I will not marry her even if she be an angel,' and 'even if I were given an angel to do so.'

30. **her hair . . . God**. The commentators all seem to agree in making reference to the dyeing of the hair, or to the wearing of false hair, so frequently satirized by Shakespeare and his contemporaries.

out of one weaver."

56. **a horn . . . money**, give me in preference a horn.

when all's done, or 'when all's said and done.'=after all.

57. **Sigh no more, etc.** Steevens compaaes *Lycidas* 165.

"Weep no more, woful shepherds, weep no more."

63. **Converting . . .nonny**, exchanging all your sighs for this refrain of merry song.

65. **ditties, lit.** a thing dictated (Lat. dictatum), then a song, and more usually one of a sad character.

moe. According to Skeat, the distinction between *mo* (*or moe*) and *more* (for which we have now only the single form *more*) is that *mo* referred to number, *more* to size. This is denied by other grammarians, according to whom both *mo* and *more* were used as comparatives of 'many., Wright, *A. Y.L.* iii .2. 243, [278], says the distinction appears to be that *mo* (*or more*) is used only with the plural, or words involving a plural sense, *more* with both singular plural.

66. **dumps.** Dyce takes this in the sense of "a melancholy strain in music" ; Schmidt and Rolfe of "low spirits, melancholy." Shakespeare uses the word in both several times and it is difficult to say which it bears here. Its being coupled with *ditties* is perhaps is favour of the former ; the preposition *of* perhaps in favour of the latter.

68. **leavy**, the form always employed by Shakespeare, and here necessary for the rhyme, was needlessly altered by Pope to *leafy*.

72. **for a shift.** *i.e.* you are better than nothing ; your singing will do at a pinch.

74. **For an.** see Abb. 101; for **should have**, 327.

76 **bode no mischief**, as the howling of a dog at night would.

as lief. This word, originally meant dear, beloved. In the present day it is found only (and that colloquially) in the phrase we have in the text, with the meaning, 'I would as soon,' etc. *Lief*, *liefer*, and *liefest* are common in Spenser : Shakespeare uses the positive (in the above sense) very frequently ; the superlative in ii. *H. VI. VI.* iii. I. 164, and the compound alder-*liefest* in the same play. i. 1. 28, "my alder-*liefest* sovereign."

night-raven. Whether this is the owl or the night-heron, *nycticorax*, is disputed. Yarrell, an eminent ornithologist,quoted by Dyce (*Gloss.*), says that the older writers called the night-heron a *raven*, "in reference probably to the word *corax*, and by Shakespeare it is called a *crow* [*i. e.. night-crow, 3. H. VI. v.* 6. 45], because *corax* is a *corvus*," i.e. belongs to the genus *crow*.

78. **dost thou hear**, not with any reference to Benedick's remarks, which are not supposed to be overheard, but merely to impress upon Balthazar the necessity of getting 'some excellent music' for such an occasion.

81. **the best**, etc., *i. e.* I will get the best, etc.

83. **that your niece**, etc, *i. e.* as to Beatrice being in love, etc.

85. **O ay . . . sits;** go on with your conversation, Benedick is listening.

stalk on, "an allusion to the *stalking-horse*; a horse either real

But it is perhaps open to doubt whether more is meant than that Benedick was indifferent as to the colour of hair his wife might have.

31. **Monsieur Love,** *i.e.* Claudio.

34. **how still,** etc. Cp. *M. of V.* v. 1. 56.

37. **the music ended,** when the music is over,

38. **we'll fit . . . pennyworth,** we will play upon him the pretty trick we have designed. *Pennyworth,* what can be bougnt for a penny, *i.e.* something trifling, yet enough for the purpose. *Kid-fox* is explained by some as the fox that has been discovered, detected, a meaning that the word *kid* bore in Chaucer's day ; by others, as Ritson, in the sense of 'young fox.' He comapres 'dog apes,' *A.Y.L.* ii. 5. 27, where however, the word may mean only *male* apes. Others again read '*hid* fox,' with a reference to Don Pedro's words two lines above.

40. **tax not,** much the same as *task,* of which it is a doublet; impose a burden upon.

41. **to slander,** *i.e.* to disgrace, etc.

42. **witness,** evidence, proof.

still, ever.

43. **to put a strange face,** to pretend to be ignorant, possibly with a reference to the pretended ignorance of unwilling witnesses in a court of law.

his, *i.e.* its,

46. **since, many . . . woes,** 'Since' here does not refer to his promise to sing, but rather to a suppressed clause such as. 'And you may well talk of wooing,' since you act very like many a wooer who begins and continues to woo one whom he nevertheless does not think more worthy of being loved than you in reality think me worthy of being asked to sing.

47. **yet . . . yet,** still he continues.

50. **notes,** music.

51. Mr. Grant White seeing a pun upon *noting* (l. 51), and *nothing* (l. 53), thinks that the title of the play might more properly be *Much Ado About Nothing*, the 'much ado' being produced entirely by 'nothing' various circumstances. Ellis (Early English Pronunciation. p. 97) ridicules this idea. According to him, the only puns here are upon *note* in the sense of 'observe' and of 'a musical sound' ; upon *noting* in the same senses, if Theobald's correction, *noting*, be adopted in l. 53 ; and upon *crotchets*, *i.e.* 'musical notes and Balthazar's 'quibbles.' The same pun on *note* occurs in *R and J.* iv. 5. 121-2.

54. **divine air !** Dyce puts these words between inverted commas, and Rolfe agrees in thinking they were meant to be understood as a quotation.

55. **sheeps' guts,** the strings of the violin : what we now call 'catgut,' though in reality they have always been made from the intestines of sheep or calves : cp. *Cymb.* iii. 3. 34, where *calves'-guts* has been needlessly altered by some editors into *cats'-guts* or *catgut.*

should hale, etc., with a reference to the word 'ravished' above. Singer compares *T.N.* ii. 3. 60, "a catch that will draw three souls

or fictitious, by which the fowler anciently sheltered himself from the sight of the game" (Steevens). Who gives various illustrations. Douce points out that a *stalking-bull* was sometimes used for the same purpose.

90. **sits the wind, etc.** As we should now say, 'Is that the way the wind blows ? Is that how matters stand?'

91. It seems better here to put a semi-colon after "think of it"; and a comma or a dash to mark an aposiopesis after "affection." Malone's explanation.' "But with what an enraged affection" [mad passion] "she loves him, it is beyond the power of thought to conceive," does not seem to strain the words too much." In "enraged affection" and "past the infinite of thought," there is again, probably a glance at euphuism.

97. **the life of passion,** the reality of love.

came. *i.e. that* came.

discovers, shows. reveals.

98. **effects,** results ontwardly manifesting themselves.

99 **bait... bite.** Claudio is supposed as before to be watching Benedick's behaviour.

100. **she will sit you.** For this use of *me, thee, him*, etc., in virtue of their representing the old dative, see Abb. 220. The force may perhaps here be rendered by, 'You may see how she will sit in the moody way my daughter just now described.'

104. **would,** see Abb. 331. In most, if not all. of the examples given there, he is no doubt right : but in the present passage, as in some of those (309) in which he denies that *will*, with the first person, was used by Shakespeare for *shall*, he perhaps refines too much.

107. **a gull,** a trick, imposition. The subs, is also used for a dupe, and more commonly the verb=to dupe.

109. **reverence,** reverent appearance.

110. **hold it up,** keep up the jest : the plot has already begun to work.

113. **that's her torment,** that, *i.e.* her determination never to tell her love, is what makes here suffering so great.'

114: **say she,** *i.e.* Beatrice.

119. **smock,** under garment, here apparently 'night-dress.'

writ, see Abb. 343.

126. **thousand halfpence,** a thousand fragments as small as half-pence. The old silver halfpenny was necessarily a very small coin.

127. **immodest to write,** *i.e. as* to write, see Add: 281.

132. **curses** has been altered by Collier's MS. Corrector into *cries*, which many editors adopt. Halliwell transposes "prays" and "curses." It is hardly likely that if "cries" had been in the original it would have been changed to "curses" nor is it perhaps necessary that we should take "curses" with the words immediately following. Even if taken with them, it may mean nothing more than utters adjurations.

135. **ecstasy,** passionate outburst.

138. **by some other,** we should now say either 'knew it *from* some

other' or 'were infomed *by* some other.'

142. an alms, a charitable deed : though 'an alms' is the correct expression, we nowadays, influenced by its plural form, use the word in the plural only : conversely, while Shakespeare wrote "*these* news," we employ the singular only. So in the *Acts of theApostles* iii. 3, asked an *alms*."

143. excellent, adv., see Abb. I.

For **out of** we should now say *beyond*.

147. blood, passion, as before.

151. bestowed this dotage endowed me with this rich heritage of love, with a reference to 1. 88 above, 'should so *dote* on,' etc.

152. daffed, thrust aside all other considerations, such as his birth and position : *daffed*, a weakened form of *doff*; see below, v 1. 78. Cp. 1. *H. IV*. iv. 1. 96, 'his comrades, that *daffed* the world aside And bid it pass.'

153. a,' see adove, i. 1. 73.

159. crossness, perverseness, obstinate opposition.

160. make tender, offer it voluntarily : the word is most frequently used by Shakespeare of an offer of love, affection marriage.

162. contemptible, contemptuous, which word Rolfe points was sometimes used by Shakespeare conversely for *contemptible*.

163. proper, handsome, very frequently in Shakespeare in this sense.

164. a good outward happiness, he is happy, fortunate, so far as externals go, has a prepossessing appearance, as Schmidt explains it : cp. *happy* in *Cymb* iii. 4 177, "tell him wherein you're *happy*, *i.e.* accomplished.

167. wit. Staunton points out that *wit* and *wisdom* were synonymous.

170. for either...fear. Said of course in order to pique Benedick.

177 howsoever it seems, etc., however much it might appear to the contrary, judging from the language he sometime uses.

large, broad, coarse.

181. counsel, reflection, as Shakespeare uses *advice H. V.* ii **2. 43,** "upon our more advice."

182. she may *i.e.* she would.

184. by, from.

185. let it cool the while, let the matter rest for the time being.

187. much unworthy, she should now say 'greaty.'

188. my lord, etc. From this point the actors in the scene move away from Benedick's place of concealment, and he of course does not hear the rest of their conversation.

189. upon this, in consequence of what he has heard from us.

192. carry, carry out, manage, contrive.

193. one an opinion, each one an opinion of, belief in, the other's dotage.

194. and no such matter, while in reality nothing of the kind exists : see above, i. 1. 160.

195. which will. etc., and it will be an entirely dumb show, for both will be too obstinate to utter a word of their real feelings : *mere and merely*=in Shakespeare entrie, entirely.

196. was sadly borne, was seriously conducted.

have the truth of this, have obtained and possess.

200. have their full bent, a metaphor from the bending of a bow to the utmost. Steevens quotes *Haml.* ii. 2. 30, Rolfe the closer parallel from *T.N.* ii. 4.38.

201. censured, the verb and the subs, in Elizabethan writers more usual—'to judge' and 'judgment' (the radical meaning) that the present meaning, that of condemnation.

I will bear, *i e.* that I am certain to bear.

205. their detractions, what is said in disparagement of them.

For to mending, we should say '*to the* mending.'

207. reprove, disprove.

209. argument, proof.

for I will, etc. This refers to the immediately preceding clause only : it is no great proof of her folly that she loves me, for I will show that I fully return the feeling.

211 quirks and remnants of wit, jests and stale quotations of witty sayings ; much the same as 'quips and sentences below.

broken on me, see above, ii. 1. 128.

215. sentences, maxims ; cp. *M.V.* i. 2. 11.

these paper bullets of the brain, these shafts of wit that are as harmless as bullets made of paper would be.

awe a man......humour, deter a man from following his inclinations.

219. some marks of love, *i.e.* in the manner in which she cames to meet him.

223. for those thanks. to win those thanks.

228. choke a daw withal. Collier's MS Corrector inserts not before chok : but Rolfe pertinently remarks that "as the difference between the *maximun* that would not choke a daw and the *minimun* that *would* is practically *nil*, the emendation seems a most superfluous one." *Withal*, with as frequently in Shakespeare. and when used as a prep., always at the end of the sentence.

stomach, appetite.

235. a Jew. "Often used in this contemptuous way. Cf. *M. of V.* ii. 2. 119 : 'I am a Jew if I serve the Jew any longer' ; 1. *H. IV*. ii 4. 198 : 'I am Jew else, ah Ebrew Jew, etc." (Rolfe.)

236, picture, likeness, a word that Shakespeare does not use in that sense.

ACT III. Scene I.

1. run thee : on *thee* for *thou*, see Abb. 212, and for the scansion of the line, 507.

3. **proposing**, "conversing, from the French word *propos*, discourse, talk" (Steevens). In l. 12 *propose* should be read for the first folie *purpose*. Rolfe compares *proposer*=speaker, *Haml.*, ii 2. 297.

4. **whisper her ear**. See Abb. 200, where examples are given of the verb without a preposition before a personal object—a construction still allowable, though we shuld hardly say 'whisper *her ear*.'

6. **all**, wholly, adv., tautological here.

7. **pleached**, see above. i 2. 8.

8. honeysuckles. Ellacombe *Plant-Lore, of Shakespeare*, pp. 95, 6) strangely says that "there can be little doubt that in Shakespaere's time the two names" [honeysuckle and woodbine] "belonged to the same plant, and that the woodbine was (when the two names were at all discriminated...) applied to the plant generally, and honeysuckle to the flower." The passage in *M. N. D.* iv. 1. 47, which he quotes,

> "So doth the woodbine the sweet honeysuckle
> Gently entwist. The female ivy so
> Enwrings the barky fingers of the elm."

Should be enough in itself to show that Shakespeare, at all events, regarded them as two distinct plants. Ellacombe also quotes from Comus "*flaunting* honeysuckle" and from Lycidas "*wellattired* woodbine," and admitting that Milton would scarcely apply two such contrary epithets to the same plant, says that that poet "does not seem to have been to have been very clear in the matter." For *woodbine*, see below, l. 30.

11. there will she hide her, there is she sure to hide herself when you tell her that we, etc.

16. trace, walk.

21. sick in love, we say 'deeply, madly, in love with,' etc., but for 'sick in love with' we should rather say dying of love for, or 'ill from love of,' etc.

of this matter, of such things as this.

23. that only wounds, etc., that wounds by hearsay only.

24. like a lapwing, the common plover, which, when any one approaches its nest, runs along the ground, uttering its peculiar cry (whence its other name of *peewit*), and so diverts attention from its eggs or young birds.

27. golden oars, fins : not that all fins are golden, but used here for the sake of contrast with '*silver* stream.'

30. woodbine, the great convolvulus or bindweed, so called from its twining about other plants : see quotation from *M. N. D.* iv. 1. 47 on l. 8 above. For *coverture* cp. *M. N. D.* ii. 1. 251. "Quite *overcanopied* by luscious woodbine."

31. fear you not etc. In reply to ll, 18, 19 above.

36. haggards, wild, untrained hawks. Steevens quotes Turbervile on Falconry, "the *haggard* doth come from foreign parts a stranger and a passenger"; and Latham, "such is the greatness of her spirit, *she will not admit of any society*, until such a time as nature worketh," etc. Shakespeare uses the word as a subs, in the above sense in several places, and also as an adj, in the sense of 'wanton,' 'libertine,' *Oth.* iii. 33. 260.

42. wish, advise, bid : for omission of *to* before *wrestle*, see Abb, 349.

45. as full as fortunate. The quarto and the two first folios give no comma after *full.* Mason, following the later folios in adding the comma, explains, "as deserving of complete happiness in the marriage state, as Beatrice herself"; and he quotes *Oth*, i. 1. 66. "What a *full fortune* does the thick-lips owe !" Whether

or not a comma should be placed after *full*, whether, that is, we are to take *full* in an adjectival or in an adverbial, sense, it seems certain that "As ever...upon" does not mean 'as complete happiness as Beatrice herself deserves,' but 'as complete happiness as to marry a wife in every way equal to Beatrice.' The two next lines show this.

50. **of prouder stuff**, Rolfe compares *J. C.* iii. 2. 97, "Ambition should be made of *sterner stuff*."

52. **misprising**, despising, undervaluing.

54. **weak**, worthless, of no consideration.

55. **project**, "a chalking out. a forming in the mind, an idea" (Schmidt), who compares 2. *H. IV.*, i, 3. 29,

"Flattering himself in *project* of a power
Much smaller than the smallest of his thoughts."

56. **self-endeared**, "self-loving, absorbed in love of self"(Rolfe).

58. **she knew his love**, we should rather say '*of* his love.'

60. **how**, see Abb. 46.

61. **spell him backward**, make out all his good qualities to be defects : as she says just below. "So turns she every way the wrong side out." Steevens quotes similar passages from Lyly's *Anatomy of Wit*, but there seems no need to suppose with him an allusion "to the practice of witches in uttering prayers."

62. **should be**, ought to be.

63. **black**, swarthy, of dark complexion.

drawing of, see Abb. 178.

an antique, a buffoon ; not only did nature intend in him to draw a buffoon, but even in doing that made a mess of it.

65. **low**, short, for 'shorter' Shakespeare, *A. Y. L.* i. 2. 284, uses 'lesser.'

an agate vilely cut, agates in seal-rings, etc., then, as now, often had figures engraved upon them. Beatrice is represented as comparing a shortman to such a figure for his size, and, more-over, to a figure badly engraved. Cf. 2. *H. IV.* i. 2. 19.

66. **a vane blown with all winds**, ever on the move, but also, perhaps, with a reference to the constant creaking of the weathercock as it is blown about from one point of the compass to another cp. below, iii. 3. 117, *Borachio*. "Did'st thou not hear somebody ?" *Con*. "No;' twas but the *vane* on the house."

70. **purchaseth**, deservedly obtains : cp. *Cot.* ii. I. 155, "Wondrous ! ay, I warrant you, and not without his true *purchasing*." There is no contrast here between 'truth and virtue' on the one hand, and 'simpleness and merit' on the other : the two latter terms are almost equivalent to 'plain, honest merit.'

71. **commendable**, accented on the first syllable, as generally in Shakespeare.

72. **not** : to avoid redundancy. Capell proposed *nor*, which Dyce reads.

from all fashions, contrary to, etc. : see Abb. 158.

74. **dare**, subjunctive.

76. **press me to death**. "The allusin is to an ancient punishment of our law called *peine fort et dure*, which was formerly

inflicted on those persons, who, being indicted, refused to plead. In consequence of their silence, they were pressed to death by an heavy weight laid upon their stomach." (Mason)

79. **it were a better**, etc. Grant White adopts the reading of the second folio, "It were a *bitter* death to die of mocks," etc., thinking that Hero is referring to her own death. But Rolfe well points out that "when Hero speaks of being pressed to death with wit, it is a more feminine hyperbole ; she has of course no real fear of such a death. Her thoughts then turn to Benedick, who, like herself. would be exposed to the mocks of Beatrice if his position became known to her ; and she says, naturally enough, 'Better let him die of secret love than of Beatrice's scorn.' The transition is as thorougly feminine as the form of expression." Dyce also rejects White's suggestion as giving "a meaning which the construction of the speech shows to be wrong."

tickling, metrically a trisyllable : see Abb. 477.

84. **honest slanders**, slanders devised and uttered with a good purpose.

89. **swift**, acute, ready. Steevens compares *A. Y. L.* v. 4. 65, "He is very *swift* and sententious"

90. **prized**, honourably reputed to have.

92. **of Italy**, belonging to Italy, or throughout all Italy.

95. **my fancy**, my idea on the subject.

96. **argument**, rather 'the powers of reasoning' (Johnson), then merely 'conversation' (Steevens).

99. **his excellence**, etc., he deserved it even long before he had it.

101. **why, every day, to-morrow**, why, from to-morrow, I shall be married (*i.e.* a married woman) every day.

103. **to furnish me**, to deck me in : cp. *R. and J.* iv. 2. 35, "Such needful ornaments as you think fit to *furnish me* to-morrow," said by Juliet on the eve of the day on which she was to be married.

104. **limed**, caught as with bird-lime ; a metaphor frequent in Shakespeare.

105. **by haps**, by accident, chance : our *perhaps*, a hybrid word, originally had the same meaning.

107. **what fire**, etc. Many of the commentators see a reference to the proverb of a person's ears burning when being talked about. There seems no necessity for this : Beatrice is merely expressing her indignation at the character that has been given her.

110. **no glory**, etc., no good repute is to be won by those who are contemptuous and scornful of others.

112. **taming...hand** : "This image is taken from falconry. She had been charged with being as wild as *haggards of the rock* ; she therefore says that *wild* as her *heart* is, she will *tame* it to the *hand*" (Johnson) : hawks being trained to sit on the hand, or rather, on the wrist of the hawker.

113. **bond**, *i.e.* band.

114. **reportingly**, more firmly than ordinary hearsay is to be believed.

Scene II.

1. **consummate**, see Abb. 342.

3. **bring**, accompany, conduct.

vouchsafe me, permit me: originally two words, *vouch*, *i.e.* warrant, and *safe*, guarantee.

5. **new gloss**, first freshness : cp. *Macb*. i. 7. 34, "Which would be worn in their *newest gloss*."

as to show, etc. Steevens quotes *R. and J*. iii 2. 29,

"As is the night before some festival
To an impatient child, that hath new robes,
And may not wear them."

7. **I will only be bold with Benedick**, etc, *i.e.* I will be bold with Benedick only, I will make a demand upon him only, for his company : *not* only for his company in the sense of 'his company and nothing more,' but 'his company and no one else's.'

9. **he hath twice...bow-string**, *i.e.* he has on several occasions shown that he laughs at love and love's attacks.

hangman : Farmer says that this is taken from Sidney's *Arcadia*, where we are told that Jove appointed Cupid,

"In this world a *hangman* for to be.
Of all those fooles that will have all they see."

Dyce (*Gloss*) thinks this probable, but also that Shakespeare here used the word as equivalent to *rogue*, *rascal*, a sense which it certainly had later on.

11. **as sound as a bell**, the least crack in a bell rendering it useless.

12 **what his heart...speaks.** According to Steevens, a covert allusion to the proverb,

"As the fool thinketh
So the bell clinketh."

17. **to be**, so that it should be.

wants, needs.

19. **the toothache** : Boswell quotes Beaumont and Fletcher, *The False One*,

"You had best be troubled *the tooth-ach* too,
For *lovers ever are*."

22. **you must hang it**, etc., allusion to hanging, drawing, and quartering, the punishment of criminals condemned for treason, which Middleton applies in the same way, *The Widow* iv. 1. 108,

Mar. "I pray, what's good for a wicked tooth ?
Ric. *Hang'd*, *drawn*, and *quartering*."

Of course Benedick's exclamation, "Hang it !" is equivalent to "curse it !"

24. **where is**, *i.e.* where there is, which is caused by.

a worm "at the root of the tooth was fromerly supposed to be the cause of toothache. Cp. Bartholomaeus. *De Prop. Rerum*, 1535 ; 'some tyme by wormes they [the teeth] ben chaunged into yelow colour, grene or black ; all this cometh of corrupt and evil humours'; and again : 'Wormes of the teethe ben slayne with myrre

and opium.' " (Rolfe.)

28. **fancy**, love, as frequently in Shakespeare.

unless it be a fancy, etc. "So in *The Seven deadly Sinnes of London*, by Tho. Dekker, 1606, 'For an Englishman's sute is like a traitor's bodie that hath been hanged, drawne, and quartered, and is set up in severall places: his codpiece in Denmarke; the collor of his dublet and the belly, in France; the wing and narrow sleeve in Italy; the short waste hangs over a Dutch botcher's stall in Utrich his huge sloppes speak Spanish: Polonia gives him the bootes, etc.—and thus we mocke everie nation, for keeping one fashion, yet steall patches from everie one of them to peece out our pride; and are now laughing-stocks to them because their cut so scurvily becomes us." (Steevens.)

32. **slops, large**, loose breeches or trousers.

33. **no doublet**, "or, in other words, all cloak, The words, 'or in the shape of...doublet' were omitted in the folio, probably to avoid giving offence to the Spaniards, with whom James became a friend in 1604" (Malone).

34. **he is no fool for fancy**, unless he has a fancy (a taste) for such foolery, as it appears he has, he cannot be said to be fooled by fancy of any kind, least of all by such fancy as you speak of, *i.e.* love.

37. **old**, *i.e.* well known.

41. **old ornament of his cheek**, his whiskers and beard: cp Dekker's *Shoemaer's Holiday*, "Yet I'll shave it off, and *stuff tennis balls* with it." Steevens gives other instances, and the allusion is the same *H. V;* iii. 7. 13, 14.

43. **by the loss**, to the extent of the loss, etc. So, below, iii. 4. 24, "heavier *by* the weight of a man."

45. **civet**, perfume obtained from a small bag at the tail of the civet-cat. This perfume undiluted is offensive; but, mixed with other substances, it was much in vogue in former times. The word is Arabic.

smell him out by that, detect his condition, with a play on the word.

49. **note**, mark, proof.

50. **and when**, etc. Grant White, quoted by Rolfe, points out that Englishmen were in those days by no means so fond of washing as they now are.

51. **paint himself**, use rouge, etc., to improve his complexion.

for the which, etc, as to which, I heard how he is talked about: on *the which* see Abb. 270.

53. **nay, but spirit**, *i.e.* think too what has become of his former love of jesting, how completely it has disappeared.

54. **lute-string**, love-songs were usually sung to the music of the lute: cp. 1. *H. IV.* i. 2. 84. *Stops* or frets, in instruments of the lute or guitar kind, were small lengths of wire across the upper part on which the fingers of the player are pressed in order to modify the tone. For "*now* governed," Walker suggests and Dyce adopts, "*new* governed," which improves the sense, as otherwise

"now...now" would look as if "at one time...and at another time" were meant.

55. **tells a heavy tale,** etc., is strong evidence against him, *i.e.* of his being in love.

57. **nay, but,** etc., yes, he is clearly in love, and not only that but I, etc.

60. **ill conditions,** bad qualities; so in *A. W.* iv. 3. 288: we no longer use the word in the plural in this sense.

62. **she shall...upwards,** she shall be buried in her lover's arms, as Steevens suggests, quoting *W. T.* iv. 5. 131.

"Not like a corse: or if, not to be buried,
But quick, and *in my arms.*"

Malone points out that Don Pedro is evidently playing on the word *dies* in Claudio's speech.

63. **yet is...toothache,** yet that is no remedy for the pain from which I told you I was suffering. Rolfe quotes from Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, 1584 (p. 197 Nicholson's edition,) "O horsecombs and sickles that have so many teeth, come heale me of my toothach." Other charms equally efficacious are also recorded there.

65. **hobby-horses.** "A person belonging to the ancient morris-dance ...made...by the figure of a horse fastened round the waist of a man, his own legs going through the body of the horse, and enabling him to walk, but concealed by a long footcloth; while false legs appeared where those of the man should be, at the sides of the horse" (Nares, *Gloss*). The term was hence contemptuously applied to foolish men and loose women.

67. **break with,** see above, i. 1. 268.

69. **and then,** *i.e.* the result of which will be.

the two bears, Beatrice and Benedick who have hitherto been as fierce to each other as two bears.

72. **good den,** a contraction of 'good even.' Other forms of the expression were *God dig-you-den* (God give you good e'en), *God gi' god-den, God ye* (give ye) *god-den*: forms of salutation "used by our ancestors as soon as noon was past, after which time 'good morrow' or 'good day' was esteemed improper" (Nares, *Gloss.*)

81. **I know not that,** I am by no means sure of that.

82. **discover,** reveal.

84. **aim better at me,** form a truer judgment of me; not (primarily) "form a better opinion of me," as Rolfe says.

85. **for,** as regards.

holds you well, loves you, regards you with favour; we still say holds you dear': cp. *Oth.* i. 3. 396, "He *holds me well.*"

dearness of heart, true good will.

89. **holp,** see Abb. 343.

89. **circumstances shortened,** to cut the matter short.

90. **for she...of,** for she has been talked of more than enough, *i.e.* has given cause for plenty of scandal: but with an equivoque on the more ordinary meaning of being *talked about*: *a talking of* see Abb. 140.

91. **disloyal,** false to her betrothed husband: see above, ii. 2. 49.

96. **to paint out**, fully to describe ; *out* here, as with many words, intensifying the meaning.

98. **fit her to it**, show that she corresponds to it.

warrant. assurance, proof.

101. **then**, after seeing that.

103. **may**, can.

105. **if you dare not...know**, if you are not then convinced by such ocular proof, do not mention what you know: *that you see*, that *which*, etc., see Abb. 244.

106. **follow me**, *i.e.* my guidance in this matter.

109. **anthing...why**, any good reason why.

115. **bear it coldly**. keep cool about it, do not noise it about.

117. **untowardly turned**, which began so happily, but is having such an untoward (unfortunate) ending.

118. **thwarting**, crossing my desires.

119. **so...sequel**, so will you say if things turn out as I know that they will.

Scene III.

Stage Direction. Dogberry and Verges. "The first of these worthies has his name from the *dogberry*, *i.e.* the female cornel, a shrub that grows in the hedges in every country in England. Verges is only the provincial pronunciation of Verjuice" (Steevens).

1. **good men and true**, the technical qualification of such public servants as constables, etc.

3. **salvation**, for damnation : if they are not good men and true it would be a shame if they escaped damnation.

5. **the prince's watch**. The relics of the past were still to be seen in some parts of England thirty years ago, with their bell and staff, though they no longer wielded the bill.

7. **give them there charge**, *i.e.* directions as to their duty ; this part of the constable's office is referred to by several of the old dramatists.

8. **desartless**, for deserving.

13. **good name**, probably 'a good reputation,' as in iii. 1.99, but Dogberry may be referring literally to this name.

to be...fortune, *well-favoured*, well-featured, good-looking : for *favour*, see above, ii. 1. 80. In *A. Y. L.* i. 2. 41-2, Celia says of Fortune that those women "that she makes honest she makes very *ill-favouredly*" ; to which Rosalind replies, "Nay, now thou goest from Fortune's office to Nature's : Fortune reigns in the gifts of the world, not in the lineaments of Nature." Of course Dogberry is 'preposterous' as usual.

19. **such vanity**, for 'such ability,' 'capacity.'

senseless, for sensible.'

21. **lantern**, part of the equipment of a watchman in days when the streets were so dimly lighted, if lighted at all.

22. **comprehend**, apprehend. **vagrom**, vagrant.

32. **tolerable**, for 'intolerable.'

34. **what belongs to a watch**, what is befitting a watch.

36. **ancient**, of long standing.

38. **bills,** the halberds or pikes which in Shakespeare's day were carried by watchmen : Johnson says they were still in use at Litchfield in his day. Steevens quotes from Glapthorne's *Wit in a Constable*, 1632—

"Well said, neighbours ;
You're chatting wisely o'er your bills and lanthorns
As becomes watchmen of discretion."

41. **if they,** etc , if they do not answer you more civilly and promise to go to their houses, you may say that you made a mistake in trying to apprehend them—an excuse which, according to Halliwell was usually made by constables when they had searched innocent persons.

48. **the less...honesty,** the less you have to do with such men the better the chance of your continuing honest men, or of being reputed such.

52. **by your office, you may** ; *i.e.* you would be perfectly jutified as watchmen in laying hands on him, but you will find it more prudent, etc.

53. **they that touch,** etc., "A popular proverb found in Ecclesiasticus xiii. 1, 'He that toucheth pitch shall be defiled therewith' " (Rolfe).

54. **to let him.. company,** to let him show what he really is *by* stealing (*i.e.* going quietly, stealthily) out etc.

65. **will never...bleats,** will never pay any attention to injunctions such as yours.

67. **to present,** to represent.

stay him, stop him and question him as to his business at that late hour.

71. **five shillings to one,** etc., I would bet five shillings to one with any man acquainted with the statutes that he may, etc. : *statues,* one of Dogberry's blunders.

77. **keep your fellows,** etc. Malone points out that "this is part of the oath of a grand juryman, and one of the many proofs of Shakespeare's having been conversant, at some period of his life, with legal proceedings and courts of justice." Even barristers are not admitted into the Crown Court till the charge is over, which Lord Campbell, *Shakespeare's Legal Acquirements*, p. 45, says is "in order that it may not be too severely criticised."

81. **church-bench,** a bench outside, or more frequently in the porches of, churches for visitors to the spot, or for worshippers waiting for the opening of the church, to rest themselves upon. These benches are still to be seen in village churches.

coil, bustle : used by Shakespeare in the sense also of trouble.

90. **mass,** *i.e.* by the mass, a petty oath.

and my elbow, etc., *i.e.* that is why my elbow, etc.

91. **scab,** "the incrustation formed over sores by dried matter ; applied to persons as a term of extreme contempt and disgust : 'Well said, i' faith, Wart ; thou'rt a good *scab*,' 2 *H. IV.* iii. 2. 296" (Schmidt).

92. **I will...that :** I will repay your rudeness in the same coin

sooner or later : cp below. v. 4. 52, "For this *I owe you.*"

94. **pent-house,** "a porch or shed with a sloping roof, common in the domestic architecture of the time" (Rolfe), and still to be seen especially in villages.

it drizzles rain, 'it,' indefinite ; it rains slightly.

95. **true drunkard,** who divulges eveything when in his cups. For the allusion to his name see above, i. 3. 42.

97. **stand close,** do not stir till we have heard their conversation.

100. **should be so dear,** should cost so much, have to be paid so highly.

101 **any villany should,** etc. Borachio is repeating Conrade's very words with the substitution of *rich for dear* : and though Conrade's remark refers to Borachio, and Borachio's to Don John, it seems scarcely necessary to change *villany* into *villain*, as some editors do. It should, however, be noticed that in the next line '*rich villains*, are spoken of.

105. **unconfirmed,** inexperienced. Rolfe quotes *L. L. L.* iv. 2. 19.

106. **nothing to a man,** of no real importance to a man.

111. **I may as well......fool,** I may as well say that you are you.

112. **deformed thief,** misshapen (but also probably with the sense of disfiguring) rascal : cp. *C. of E.* v. 298—

"O grief hath changed me since you saw me last
And careful hours with time's *deformed* hand
Have written strange defeatures in my face."

114 **this seven year,** for ever so long, indefinite ; for the sing. cp. above, ii. 3. 14.

goes up and down, *i.e.* instead of being locked up, as he ought to be, in jail.

119. **hot bloods,** hot-blooded young men ; young rakes : the term in this sense was common till a very recent period. The expression 'young blood' in *J. C.* iv. 3. 262, quoted by Rolfe, is scarcely analogous.

121. **Pharaoh's soldiers,** *i.e.* figures taken from Scriptural subjects in the old tapestries or the 'painted cloths' freqently mentioned by Shakespeare.

reechy or *reeky*, smoked, dirty from age and from the smoke of the flaring lights used by our ancestors.

122. **Bel's priests,** 'alluding," says Steevens, "to some awkward representation of the story of *Bel and the Dragon*, as related in the Apocrypha." Representations of Biblical narratives are common in the stained-glass windows of churches and cathedrals in Europe.

123. **the shaven Hercules,** *i.e* "Hercules when shaved [of his beard] to make him look like a woman, while he remained in the service of Omphale, his Lydian mistress. Had *the shaved Hercules* been meant to represent Samson [as Warburton imagined], he would probably have been equipped with a jawbone [he having slain a thousand men with that weapon] instead of a club." (Steevens.)

smirched, soiled, sullied ; cp. *A. Y. L.* i. 3. 114.

125. **wears out**, causes them to cast aside as worn out.

126. **giddy with the fashion**, has not this fashion of which you talk so much. turned *your* head, made *you* giddy and incapable of keeping long to one thing? The play upon words is kept up in *shifted out of*, as though out of a garment.

131. **leans me**, see Abb. 220.

134. **possessed**, primarily 'instructed,' 'informed beforehand,' as in *T. N.* ii. 3. 149, "Possess us, possess us," *i.e.* communicate your knowledge to us; but probably also with a play upon the word in the sense of being taken possession of by an evil spirit.

135. **amiable encounter**, loving meeting; we do not now use 'amiable' of 'loving' in this sense, but rather to mean 'of a kindly temper, disposition.'

140. **possessed**, persuaded, convinced; in an evil sense.

143. **as he was appointed**, as it had been appointed he should do; according to the arrangement for the marriage.

144. **temple**, church; the Latin term, which Shakespeare frequently uses in this sense.

145. **shame her with what** *i.e.* by the narration of that which he saw, etc.

148. **right master**. The second watchman seems to use *right* as an adv., as in such phrases as "*right* honourable," "*right* noble."

149. **recovered...lechery**, for 'discovered' and 'treachery.

152. **a lock**, see Malone's note quoted on v. 1. 294.

157. **obey you**, for 'persuade you.'

159. **we are like...bills**. Here is a cluster of conceits. *Commodity* was formerly, as now, the usual term for an article of merchandise. To *take up*, besides its common meaning (to apprehend was the phrase for obtaining goods on credit. 'If a man is thorough with them in honest *taking up* (says Falstaff) [2 *H. IV.* i. 2. 45], then they must stand upon security.' *Bill* was the term both for a single bond, and a halberd. We have the same conceit in K. H. VI., P. II. [iv. 7. 134], 'My lord, when shall we go to Cheapside, and *take up commodities* upon our *bills*?' " (Malone.)

161. **a commodity in question**, *i e.* "a commodity subject to judicial trial or examination" (Steevens).

Scene IV.

6. **rabato**, "an ornament for the neck, a collar-band or kind of ruff. Fr. *rabat*. Menage saith it comes form *rabatter*, to put back, because it was at first nothing but the collar of the shirt or shift turn'd back towards the shoulders" (T. Hawkins). Steevens quotes (among other passages) Dekker's *Guls Hornbook*, 1609: Your stiff necked *rebatoes* (that have more arches for pride to row under, than can stand under five London bridges) durst not then," etc.

8. **by my troth, 's not so good**: *i.e.* it is not so, etc.

12. **tire**, a shortened form of *attire*, decoration; here *headdress*: cp. *M. W.* iii. 3. 61," Any *tire* of Venetian admittance.

within, *i.e.* in an inner room.

if the hair...browner, if the hair in the head-dress were only a shade browner, so as to match Hero's better; a reference to the false

hair in vogue then, as now, and so frequently satirized.

16. **exceeds,** intransitive, like "passes," *T. A.* i. 1. 12, "passed," *M. W.* i. 1 310, used absolutely.

17. **a night-gown,** a loose gown for undress : what we now call a night-gown would have then been known as a *bed*-gown.

in respect of, in comparison with.

19. **cloth o' gold,** cloth thickly interwoven with gold threads, the Indian *Kmkhab* ; cp. *H. V.* iv. 1. 279, "The intertissued robe *of gold* and pearl."

18. **cuts.** Schmidt explains this as "a slope in a garment," a very vague sense : it more probably refers to the slashed sleeves of the period—a fashion lately revived—which had their counterpart in the "*razed* shoes" mentioned in *Haml*, iii. 2. 288.

set with pearls. It was common to sew garments of state with small pearls called '*seed* pearls' : cp. Marlowe, *Edward the Second* i. 4. 414—

"He wears a short Italian cloak
Larded with pearl."

19. **down sleeves, side sleeves.** Steevens, followed by Dyce, takes "down sleeves" as equivalent to "down the sleeves" ; but the most satisfactory explanation is that given by Grant White: "The dress was made after a fashion which is illustrated in many old portraits. Beside a sleeve which fitted more or less closely to the arm and extended to the wrist, there was another for ornament, which hung from the shoulder, wide and open" ; in which case, as Rolfe remarks, *down sleeves* would mean the inner close sleeves *side sleeves* the outer loose ones. *Side* or *syde*, in the north of England and in Scotland was, according to Steevens, used for *long* when applied to the garment. He quotes from the *Paston Letters*, "a short blue gown that was made of a *side* gown" ; and Reed from Fitzherbert's *Book of Husbandary*, "Theyr cotes be so *syde* that they be fayne to tucke them up when they ride, as women do theyr kyrtels when they go to the market."

skirts round underborne with, etc , skirts trimmed all round with, etc.

20. **quaint,** Fr. *cointe*, Lat. *comptus*, elegant.

26. **honourable without marriage,** *i.e.* even without marriage, the word *honourable* belonging to him as a title : *honourable in a beggar* is probably a reference to *Hebrews* xiii. 4, "Marriage is honourable in all", etc., a passage which forms part of the marriage service of the English Church.

29. **saving your reverence. 'a husband.'** The Cambridge Editors who read 'saving your reverence, husband remark, "Modern editions have *say, saving your reverence, 'a husband.'* But surely Margaret means that Hero was so prudish as to think that the mere mention of the word 'husband' requires an apology." This seems quite to miss the point. Margaret in effect says, I see what it is that shocks your modesty ; instead of saying 'by the weight of a *man*,' I should for the sake of propriety (saving your reverence) have said 'by the weight of a *husband*' ; for unless bad thinking wrest speaking (*i. e.* unless

immodest put a bad construction upon honest words), you cannot at all events find anything objectionable in my amended version, 'the heavier for a *husband*.'

31. **the right husband, and the right wife,** *i.e.* not a husband with some one else's wife.

32. **light,** the play on this word in its two senses of *not heavy* and of *wanton* is very frequent in Shakespeare.

33. **ask...else;** *i.e.* if you do not believe what I say.

36. **speak in the sick tune,** in the tune, or tone of voice, of a sick person.

37. **am out...tune,** cannot speak in any other tune ; with a reference to the phrases *in tune*, *out of tune*, *i.e.* harmony.

38. **clap's,** etc., let us quickly strike into the tune of the dance called *Light o' love* : which is frequently mentioned by the old dramatists, and of which Sir J. Hawkins discovered the music in an old MS.

39. **without a burden,** a pun on the word in its senses of *a musical refrain*, and of *a load*, referring to Hero's heaviness of heart.

do you sing it, *i.e.* hum the air.

40. **yea, light o' love.** Some editors retain the reading of the quarto and the folios, '*ye*, light o' love,' which was altered by Capell into '*yea*,' etc. On *ye* as nominative see Abb. 236 : *light o' love* was a common term for a loose woman.

42. **barns,** a quibble on *barns*, in the sense of storehouses for grain, and *bairns*, *i.e.* children. There is no necessity to adopt Ingleby's allusion to *stables* in another sense.

43. **illegitimate construction** ! illogical conclusion, with a side reference to the legal sense of the adjective.

with my heels. To scorn anything with the heels, *i e.* as if kicking out at it, was formerly a very common expression : cp *M. of V.* ii. 2.9.

46. **ready,** dressed ; a *unready* was used for *undressed*.

47. **for a hawk,** etc. Do you sing 'heigh-ho' for a, etc. " '*Heigh-ho for a husband*, or the willing Maid's Wants made known, is a title of an old ballad in the Pepysian Collection, in Magdalen College, Cambridge" (Malone).

48. **for the letter,** etc., a reference to the older pronunciation of *ache*, *i.e. aitch*. Steevens quotes an epigram of Heywood's on the letter H—

"It is worst among letters in the cross row ;
For if thou find him either in thine elbow,
In thine arm, or leg, in any degree;
In thine head, or teeth, or toe, or knee ;
Into what place soever H may pike him,
Wherever thou find *ache* thou shall not like him";

to which Staunton adds one from *Wit's Recreation*, 1640—

"Nor hawk, nor hound, nor horse those *h*, *h*, *h*,
But *ach* itself, 'tis Brutus bones *attaches*.

49. **turned Turk,** a proverbial expression for any change of condition for the worse, especially of changing one's religion : cp. *Haml.* iii. 2. 287.

there's no more, etc., we need never again trust the stars.

51. trow, *i.e.* do you trow, think? Surely not *here* in the sense given by Schmidt.

54. are an excellent perfume, *i.e. of* an excellent perfume, excellently scented. Presents of scented gloves were common.

56. stuffed, have a cold in my nose and cannot smell.

57. there's a goodly, etc., that's a pretty way of catching cold; with also a double sense of the word *stuffed.*

60. professed apprehension, set up for a wit, as Rolfe explains it, with a reference to the practising of any profession or calling.

61. left it, *i.e.* left off 'professing apprehension.'

63. his not...cap, that is, where it may be conspicuous: probably with a reference to the custom of knights, etc., wearing in their helmets, etc., gloves and other tokens of their mistresses' favour.

65. Carduus Benedictus, " 'or blessed thistle (says Cogan, in his *Haven of Health,* 1595), so worthily named for the singular virtues that it hath.' 'This herbe may worthily be called *Benedictus or Omnimorbia,* that is, a salve for every sore, not knowen to physitians of old time, but lately revealed by the special providence of Almighty God' " (Steevens). A handsome annual from the south of Europe, which was supposed to cure even the plague.

66. lay it to your heart, *i.e* apply it to your heart, as a plaster, etc, is applied, and with a play on the phrase 'to lay a thing to heart,' *i.e.* to ponder on it.

67. prickest her with a thistle, *i.e.* your words pierce her very sharply; with a pun, of course, on the word *thistle.*

68. some moral, some secret meaning. Malone quotes from *T. of S.* iv. 4. 79, and the *Rape of Lucrece* l. 103.

72. I am not...can, I am not such a fool as to give free play to my thoughts and think just what I should like to think, nor do I like to think all that I might think, etc. Margaret, in her banter of Hero, is merely stringing together a number of phrases without much meaning: *list,* from A.S. *lust.,* *i.e.* pleasure.

74. think...thinking, think till I have worn my heart out with thinking.

76. such another, a scoffer at love like yourself; *become a man,* has shown himself as capable of being wounded by love as any other man.

78. in despite...grudging, "is in love and takes kindly to it" (says M. Mason): "in spite of his resolution to the contrary feeds on love, and likes his food" (Malone). But it seems doubtful whether anything more is meant than that Benedict, in spite of his heart being touched with love, does not find himself any the worse for it. Middleton, *Women Beware Women* iv. 1. 115—

"The former thing, my lord, to whom you gave
The captainship, he *eats his meat with grudging* still:"

i.e. he is not yet satisfied with what has been done for him.

80. look...do, are like other women, liable to love. Steevens explains, "direct your eyes towards the same object—viz, a husband."

82. not a false gallop a natural, not a forced pace. In *A. Y. L.*

iii. 2. 119, "The very *false gallop* of verses" means an unrhythmical measure.

84. **withdraw,** *i.e.* to your dressing-room in order to get ready.

86. **fetch**, escort, conduct.

Scene V.

2. **confidence, decerns,** for 'conference,' 'concerns.'

9. **off the matter,** away from the purpose.

11. **honest...brows,** a proverbial expression, of which Reed quotes other instances. The 'brows' probably because the eyes and forehead are supposed to be especially indicative of character.

15. **odorous,** for 'odious.'

palabras, So in the *Taming of the Shrew* [Ind. i. 5], the Tinker says, *pocas pallabras i.e.* few words—a scrap of Spanieh which might once have been current among the vulgar, and had appeared, as Mr. Henley observes, in *The Spanish Tragedy*, 'Pocas pallabras,' 'milde as the lambe'" (Steevens).

19. **the poor Duke's officers.** In *M. for M.* ii. 1. 47, Elbow blunders in the same way, "I am the *poor duke's* constable."

23. **an 'twere,** etc., as though the Duke had credited him with bestowing something valuable upon him.

a thousand pound, *i.e* the aggregate sum; see above, ii. 3. 14.

24. **exclamation,** another of Dogberry's blunders, though for what word, unless for 'acclamation,' it is not easy to see.

29. **excepting...presence.** Verges means to say, if such a thing may be mentioned in your worshipful presence: but by the turn of the words he makes the Duke out to be the most arrant knave in Messina. *Arrant*, according to Murray's *English Dictionary*, "a variant of *errant*, 'wandering, vagrant, vagabond,' which, for its use in such expressions as *arrant thief*, became an intensive, 'thorough, notorious, downright.' especially from its original association with opprobrious names." Though this opprobrious sense is generally present, there are instances of the word being used in a good sense; *e.g.*, Ford *The Fancies*, etc., iii. 2—

"'Tis scarce possible
To distinguish one of these vile naughty jacks
From true and *arrant* ladies."

So, too, in *Love's Sacrifice* iii. 2, *The Loyal Subject* iii. 5, *Little French Lawyer* iv. 4. 4.

33. **when the age,** etc. As Rolfe points out, an obvious blunder for the old proverb, "When the wine is in, the wit is out."

it is a world to see. Various explanations are given of this phrase: wonderful to see; worth seeing; a treat to see. Dyce points out that it was in use as early as Skelton's time and as late as Strype's *Annals of the Reformation*, first published in 1725. Rolfe compares *T. of S.*, ii. 1. 113, "that *is a world to see.*"

35. **God's a good man,** another proverbial expression which Steevens illustrates from several old writers.

an two men, etc, probably, as Halliwell says, a proverb implying

that the chief post of distinction can belong to but one ; that where two are associated in any labour, where one leads, the other must follow ; though, like the words 'God's a good man,' this is but an imitation of the irrelevant talk, largely made up of old saws, which so often serves as a butt for the satire of the old dramatists, as in Jonson's *Tale of a Day*, Middleton's *Blurt, Master-Constable*, etc.

37. **but God...alike,** a condescending excuse for Verges' infirmities. Similarly in *M. V.* i. 2. 60, Portia says of the French Lord, "God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man." In the same condescending strain Dogberry replies to the Duke's ironical acknowledgement of his vast superiority to Verges. "Gifts that God gives."

42. **comprehended, auspicious,** for 'apprehended,' 'suspicious.'

47. **suffigance,** sufficient.

54. **examine.** This is the reading of the folios : the quarto give "examination," which most editors adopt. Grant White, however, well remarks, "The blunder in the quarto is entirely out of place in Dogberry's mouth ; it is not of the sort which Shakespeare has made characteristic of his mind. Dogberry mistakes the significance of words, but never errs in the forms of speech ; he is not able to discriminate between sounds that are like without being the same, but he is never at fault in grammar ; and this putting of a substantive into his mouth for a verb is entirely at variance with his habit of thought, and confounds his cacology with that which is quite of another sort" To this Rolfe adds in support of the folio reading that Dogberry has just used the verb correctly.

56. **we will spare for,** etc. it will not be for lack of wisdom if it is not done as it should be.

57. **a non-come,** *i.e.* to a *non compos mentis* ; put them out of their wits : or, perhaps, he confounds the term with *non-plus*," (Malone).

58. **excommunication,** for communication, official report.

Act IV. Scene I.

2. **you shall recount...afterwards,** shall address them afterwards more fully as to the natural duties of a husband and wife. An exhortation of this nature is contained in the ritual of the marriage ceremony, but over and above this it was customary for the priest to make a special address to newly-married couples. Such an address would of course be out of place on the stage.

6. **to be married to her.** Leonato supposes that Claudio's answer "No" merely had reference to the verbal inaccuracy of ths friar's question.

9. **if either......it.** The words in use in the marriage service at the present day are almost the same : "I require and charge you both......that if either of you know impediment, why ye may not be lawfully joined together in matrimony, ye do now confess it".

18. **some be......he !** "A quotation from the old grammars.

Cf. Lyly, *Endymion*, 1591, where one of the characters exclaims, 'Hey-ho.' 'What's that?' another asks; and the reply is 'An interjection, whereof some are of mourning, as *eho vah*' " (*Rolfe*).

20. by, aside.

father. So in *T. of S* ii. 1. 292, even before the betrothal has taken place, Petruchio says, "Father, 'tis thus, and again ii. 1. 318—

"Provide the feast, *father*, and bid the guests":

and five lines lower down—

Father and *wife*, and gentlemen, adieu";

it being customary in those days for spouses, *i.e.* those betrothed, to term one another 'husband' and 'wife' even before the marriage ceremony, and consequently their future parents-in-law 'father' and 'mother.'

render...again, strictly speaking, tautological, as 'render' in itself means 'give back again.'

27. learn, teach.

32. authority, warranty, guarantee; rather than dignity, nobleness,' as Schmidt explains it, for it is 'show,' not reality.

33. withal, a preposition.

34. comes, *i.e.* into her cheeks, offers itself as a witness.

35. simple, pure.

36. that she were, see Abb. 368.

37. by these, judging by these.

38. luxurious. lascivious, the sense in which Shakespeare always used the word.

40. not to be married, etc., *i.e.* I mean not to be, etc. Dyce adopts Tyrwhitt's suggestion that the words, "Not to be married not to knit my soul," should be read as a single line, thus, getting rid of the harshness of metre in the usual arrangement by which.

"Not to knit" begins a separate line. Steevens suggests "Nor knit," etc.

41. approved, proved.

42. dear my lord, on the transposition, see Abb. 13, and on the word *dear*., 480.

in your own proof, having made proof of her: with a reference to the words '*approved* wanton.'

43. have vanquished......youth, have, by your importunity, taken advantage of her youth, and overcome her scruples of modesty.

44. made defeat, accomplished the ruin of, etc. So in *H. V.* i. 2. 107, "*Making defeat* on the full power of France."

45. known her, *i.e.* carnally.

46. you'll say......sin, you will say that, being betrothed to me, she already looked upon me as her husband, and so will palliate her guilt on the grounds that she did but prematurely grant me conjugal rights. *The 'forehand sin* (not *forehand* as Schmidt gives), the sin which consisted in the deed being premature. Betrothal in Shakespeare's day was looked upon as a contract much more binding than the "engagement" of modern times, and was accompanied by

certain ceremonies such as the joining of hands before witnesses see *W. T.* iv. 4. 400 *et seqq*; the exchange of kisses, see *K. John* ii. 1. 532-5; the interchange of rings, see *T. N.* v. 1. 159-62, *R. III.* i. 2. 202, *T.G. of V.* ii. 2. 5. 7. One result of these espousals or betrothals was that subsequent seduction was not considered so heinous as if there had been no contract.

49. **too large**, licentious; so above, ii. 3. 177.

53. **out on thy seeming**! this, Pope's correction for *thee*, is made almost necessary by the words 'against it': according to Delius, who reads "Out on thee, seeming!" *seeming* is the personification of hypocrisy in Hero: he compares *enchantment*, *W. T.* iv. 4. 445, and *fair affliction*, *K. John* iii. 4. 36.

54. **you seem**, etc. Hanmer, followed by Dyce, reads, "you seem'd," which Malone also had conjectured. But this is scarcely an improvement. The contrast is between *seem* in this line and *are* in 1.56, and Claudio might well say, "from your appearance one would suppose you to be 'as Dian,' as Dian,'" etc.

I will write against it: Steevens quotes *Cymb.* ii. 5. 32, where Posthumus, persuaded of his wife's disloyalty, says in regard of women—

"*I'll write against* them,
Detest them, curse them."

55. **as is...blow**, "before the air has tasted its sweetness" (Johnson).

57. **those...sensuality**, those highly-fed animals that have no hard work which might keep down their sensual propensities.

59. **wide**, so far from the purpose. Steevens quotes *T. and C.* iii. 1.97, "No, no; no such matter, you are *wide*," and *M. W.* iii. 1.5, "I never heard a man of his place, gravity, and learning *so wide* of his own respect."

60. **sweet prince...you.** Dyce, followed by Delius and others, gives these words to Claudio, and the arrangement seems probable.

what should I say, etc., what can I possibly say?

61. **that**, almost equivalent to 'in that,' 'seeing that.'

gone about, endeavoured, busied myself about, etc.

62. **stale**, as above, ii. 2. 23, almost=prostitute: lit. that which has stood too long and so become vapid, tainted.

63. **are these**, etc. Steevens quotes *Macbeth* i. 3. 83—

"Were such things here, as we do speak about?
Or have we eaten on the insane root
That takes the reason prisoner?"

64. **sir...true.** Not only are they spoken, but also they are true.

65. **nuptial**, singular, as generally (perhaps always, for the exceptions are of doubtful authority) in Shakespeare. On the other hand we have in *J. C.* iv. 3. 105. "his funerals," where Craik compares the Fr. *funerailes* and the Latin *funera*.

true! o God! most probadly referring to Don John's words "and these things are true. Some editors, however, read "True, O

God !" and take the words as answer to Benedick.

70. **move one question:** Rolfe compares *T. C.* ii. 3. 89, "We dare not *move one question* of our place," where, however, the meaning is slightly different.

71. **kindly**, natural : that which you derive from nature.

75. **what kind**, etc., a reference to the Church Catechism, the first question in which is, "What is your name ?"

76. **to make you**, etc. What is the object of your catechising me, says Hero by implication ; the object of it, replies Claudio, is to make you, etc. The words *truly to your name* refers to the answering by a man to his name when called upon to give evidence in court, or on similar occasions ; but Hero, bewildered by the strange turn which the proceedings have taken, answers literally. Is it not Hero, the same as ever and as free from taint ?

79. **Hero itself**, *i.e.* the name.

81. **out at your window**, standing outside, close to your window.

82. **if you are a maid**, if you are as chaste and free from reproach as you pretend to be, you will not hesitate to answer this question.

84. **you are no maiden**, if you had admitted that you were talking to a man at a man at your window, and had explained how it happened, we might perhaps be still able to believe in your innocence; but as you deny that to which we were all witnesses, it is no longer possible for us to have any faith in you.

89. **most...villain**, with all the unblushing effrontery of a villain. *Liberal*, licentious, as frequently.

94. **there is not ... them**, no language has a vocabulary which could utter them without using terms that would shock the hearer.

96. **much misgovernment**, exceeding lack of continence, self-restraint for *much*=great, see Abb. 51.

97. **O Hero**, etc. Here, in the second "Hero," Johnson imagines a poor conceit upon the word; but it is almost impossible to believe that in a scene so solemn Shakespeare would have represented the person most deeply interested in the matter as making a wretched pun.

101. **thou pure...purity !** cp. Tennyson, *Lancelot and Elaine*, ll. 871, 2—

"His honour rooted in dishonour stood,
And faith unfaithfuly kept him falsely true."

102. **for thee**, on thy account.

103. **conjecture**, suspicion : Rolfe quotes *W. T.* ii. 1. 176, and *Haml*, iv. 5. 15.

107. **gracious**, a trisyllable, attractive.

108. **come**, p. part.

109. **smother up**, 'up' intensive : cp. below, l. 149, 'barr'd *up*'

114. **may**=can or could.

116. **dost thou look up** ? do you venture to take courage, to be cheeful ? For *look up* in this sense, cp. *Haml.* iii. 3. 50—

"Then I'll *look up*:
My fault is past."

and *W.T.* v. 1. 215, "Dear, *look up*."

120. the story, etc. " 'That is the story which her blushes discover to be true' (Johnson) : Schmidt takes *blood* to be used in the same sense as in ii. 1. 159 above [*i.e.* passion]. Seymour objects to the former explanation that Hero had fainted ; but we find the friar afterwards referring to the 'thousand blushing apparitions' he had noted in her face, and this may be a similar reference" (Rolfe).

123. spirts, a monosyllable, your vital forces.

124 on the rearward, after heaping reproaches upon you, "would still come after them to finish what they had only done by halves" (Schmidt). Delius compares "behind the back," iii. 1. 110.

126. at frugal nature's frame ? Delius, comparing *R III.* i. 2. 244, "*Fram'd* in the prodigality of nature," paraphrases, 'Did I formerly grieve that I had only *one* child, and scold at the parsimonious ordinance or dispensation of Nature that gave me that one child only ?' Malone, "Grieved I at nature's being so *frugal* as to have *framed* for me only one child." Staunton would give the sense of *limit, restriction*, to *frame ;* Schmidt that of *castingmould*. For the construction of *child* with *that*, Rolfe compares *T. G. of V.* ii. 1. 178, *A. Y. L.* iii 5. 129, *W. T.* iv. 4. 6.

127. by thee, 'by' indicating the excess, as above, iii. 4.24, "*by* the weight of a man."

130. took, see Abb. 343.

at my gates, *i.e.* a foundling that had been left at my gates by some poor woman unable to bring it up herself.

131. who smirched, etc. For a similar construction cp. *M. of V.* iv. 1. 134—

> "Thy currish spirit
> Govern'd a wolf, who hang'd for human slaughter.
> Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet."

Smirched, sullied, befouled : cp. *H. V.* iv. 3. 110, "Our gayness and our gilt are all *besmirched*."

133. derives itself, has its origin : Lat. *derivare*.

134. mine I loved...praised, *i.e.* whom I loved whom I praised : see Abb. 244.

136. that I...her, mine so wholly that, in my estimation of her, she seemed more myself than I myself was. In the marriage ritual the husband speaks of the wife as "flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone," and here Leonato speaks of Hero as if she had been something even more than this.

138. into a pit of ink, *i.e.* black contamination. Steevens compares *Macb.* ii. 6. 60—

> "Will all great Neptune's *ocean wash* this blood
> *Clean* from my hand?"

140. and salt...flesh ! The metaphor is taken from the preserving of meat by means of salt, and is frequent in Shakespeare cp. *T. N.* i. 1. 30—

> "All this to *season*
> A brother's dead love, which she would keep *fresh*," etc.

In support of '*foul*-defiled,' which Collier would needlessly alter

into '*soul*-defiled,' Dyce quotes *Lucrece*, l. 1029—

"The remedy indeed to do me good
Is to let forth my *foul-defiled* blood,"

and Peele's *Edward I.*—

"That I was hew'd with *foul-defiled* hands."

He also refers to Leonato's words a few lines lower down, "speaking of her *foulness*." For *too* followed by *which*, see Abb. 278.

142. attir'd in wonder, wrapped up in astonishment : cp. *Lucrece*, l. 1601. Why art thou thus *attired* in discontent." Schmidt refers to Shakespeare's use of *enwrap* and *wrap* in similar senses.

149. barr'd up, strengthened by. *Up*, intensive.

151. foulness, so *Lear*, i. 1. 230, "no vicious blot, murder, or *foulness*."

152. wash'd, *i.e.* he washed.

hence from her, away from her, leave her to herself.

153. hear me . mark'd. These lines appear in the quarto as prose with the reading "been silent" (which words were transposed by Grant White), and no stop after "lay." The Camb. Edd. consider that the punctuation usually adopted, of a colon after "lady," makes but indifferent sense. *By noting* seems to be equivalent to 'being engaged in, occupied by, marking,' etc. *Given way...fortune*, *i.e.* without interrupting matters by any protest in her behalf.

157. blushing apparitions, the blushes which suddenly appeared in her cheeks and were as quickly succeeded by the paleness of frightened innocence. The reading in the text is that of Reed adopted by Dyce. For *shames* (pl.) Rolfe quotes *A. C.* i. 4. 72—

"Let his *shames* quickly
Drive him from Rome."

160. to burn the errors, as though they were heretics : Steevens compares *R. and J.* i. 2. 93, where the same expression is used of tears.

164. experimental seal, the seal of experience.

165. book, *i.e.* reading, my knowledge derived from books.

166. calling, sacred profession.

divinity, knowledge of sacred things.

168. biting error, cruel mistake : *biting*, a word which Shakespeare frequently used in the same metaphorical sense, is needlessly altered by Collier's MS. Corrector into "blighting."

169. grace, the only redeeming good quality.

171. she not denies, for the transposition see Abb. 305.

173. proper, in its own naked reality.

175. they know, etc., *i.e.* let *them* answer, *I* cannot.

181. maintained the change, interchanged words with, kept up a conversation with, as we should say. In *Lear* iii. 3. 16, we have '*maintain* talk,' and *T. N.* iv. 2. 107, even *maintain* words.'

182. refuse, deny disown : cp. *R. and J.* ii. 2. 34.

183. misprision, misunderstanding.

princes, under this term is included Claudio.

184. the very bent. Johnson, followed by Dyce, Delius, and Rolfe, understands *bent* to mean "the utmost degree of any passion

or mental activity," and derives the metaphor from archery. He quotes "her affections have their full *bent*," ii. 3. 200. Schmidt explains "tendency, a leaning or bias of the mind, inclination" ; and this seems both more apposite here, and more suitable to the word *very*=true, as in *J. C.* ii. 1. 210, "I can give his humours the *true bent*" : it is also in keeping with *misled* in the next line.

186. **the practice**, the contriving.

lives seems more forcible than *lies*, for which it was supposed to be a misprint, and means 'has its vitality from,' etc.

187. **whose...villanies**, whose energies spend themselves upon the fashioning of villainous schemes.

188. **but truth**, nothing more than truth.

189. **if they wrong**. etc., if on the other hand they, etc.

shall well hear of it, *i.e.* I shall not tamely sit quiet, but will call them to a rigorous account, proud and of high rank as they may be.

191. **invention**, as in *H. V.* Prol. i. 2, a quadrisyllable, mental activity (Schmidt). **eat**, see Abb. 343.

194. **Nor...friends**, nor has my life been so ill spent as to drive my friends from my side.

195. **awaked in such a kind**, in me when aroused in such a manner, if the reading is right ; but Dyce. following Walker, reads *cause*.

198. **to quit...throughly**, to requite them fully, make myself thoroughly even with them for their ill deeds. *Throughly* for 'thoroughly' as frequently in Shakespeare.

200. **the princes**, the old reading *princess* was corrected by Theobald.

201. **secretly kept in**, kept in retirement where no one shall know of her existence.

203. **mourning ostentation**, appearance of mourning ; not in the sense in which the word is now always used, pretentious show.

204. **and on...epitaphs**. Gifford, in a note upon Ben Jonson's elegy on Lady Jane Pawlet (quoted by Mr. Stone on *H. V.* i. 2. 233), says that the custom of affixing (with pins, wax, paste etc.), to the hearse of the deceased persons short laudatory poems as epitaphs, was a common one on the continent in his day, and one that had prevailed formerly in England also. He quotes from Eliot's elegy on Lady Pawlet—

> "Let others, then, sad epitaphs invent,
> And paste them up about my monument," etc.

And from the Bishop of Chichester's verses to the memory of Dr. Donne—

> "Each quill can drop his tributary verse,
> And pin it, like the hatchments, to the hearse."

207. **what shall become**, etc. What good will result from this ? See Abb. 321.

208. **well carried**, skilfully carried out : Rolfe quotes *M.N.D.* iii. 2. 240. "This sport, *well carried*, shall be chronicled," and refers to ii. 192, above.

remorse, pity ; the sense it more frequently has in Shakespeare.

210. but not...course, but it is not only with that hope that I advise this course which seems to you so vague and strange : in using the word *dream*, he is looking at the matter from their point of view rather than from his own, for from that there is nothing vague, dreamy, in his project.

211. but on this, etc. This labour will produce still greater results ; a metaphor from childbirth.

travail, the same word as *travel* (both forms implying labour, exertion), meant originally an obstacle or impediment.

212. as it...maintained, for so we much assert the fact to have been.

216. to the worth, adequately.

217. whiles, see Abb. 137. Rolfe points out that "being lack'd" does not mean 'being missed,' but 'missing,' 'wanting,'

218. rack the value, exaggerate, stretch it to the utmost point. Steevens says the allusion is to *rack-rents* [*i.e.* rents stretched to their full value].

than we...once : cp. *A. and C.* i. 4. 43-4—

"And the ebb'd man, ne'er love'd till ne'er worth love,
Conmes dear'd by being lack'd."

221. upon. "not 'after' but 'in consequence of his words,' " says Abbott ; but there seems to be also the idea of immediate sequence.

idea, image, as always in Shakespeare.

223. his study of imagination, the study of his imagination, his imaginative study : when he allows his imagination, reflection, to work. For the collocation cp. *Haml.* i 4. 73, "your sovereignty of reason,' *i.e.* the sovereignty of your reason.

224, every...life, all her personal graces of feature and figure.

225. habit, dress, guise, appearance.

226. moving-delicate, the old reading is "moving, delicate," etc. The hyphen is due to Capell, and though most modern editors follow him, it seems doubtful whether the new reading is a gain. *Moving-delicate* would meau 'impressively graceful' : see Abb. 2.

227. eye and prospect, apparently a reduplicative phrase of little more force than 'eye alone: it occurs again in *K. John* ii. 1. 208.

229. if ever...liver, if ever love touched his heart, as we should say. As among the ancients, the liver was in Shakespeare's day supposed to be the seat of love.

231. though he, etc, however certain he might be of the truth of his accusation.

232. success, the sequel, whether good or bad: frequently qualified in Shakespeare by 'good,' 'best' 'bad,' 'vile.' In *W. T.* i. 2. 394, the word is used in the modern sense of *succession*—

"Which less adorns
Our gentry than our parents' noble names
In whose *success* we are gentle."

Nowadays *success* and *succeed* when standing alone always have a good sense, but both may be qualified by a depreciatory epithet.

234. **likelihood**, supposition, conjecture.

235. **but if...infamy**, but if (though I hope for better things) we should not in any other respect hit the mark at which we aim, *i.e.* if we should altogether fail to re-establish Hero's character, the supposition of her death will at all events, stop the tongues of those who would otherwise always be exclaiming at her guilt.

238. **sort**, turn out, issue (Lat. *sortiri*), frequent in Shakespeare.

240. **reclusive**, secluded, see Abb, 3 and 445.

241. **out of...injuries**, beyond the reach of scornful looks, remarks, thoughts, and annoyances. *injuries* seems in a way to qualify the whole line, making it by a kind of hendiadys equivalent to 'injurious locks, remarks, thoughts, and actions.'

242. **advise**, be your adviser in the matter; *i.e.* follow his counsel.

243. **inwardness**, intimacy; in which sense Shakespeare uses the adj. also.

much, as in l. 96 above, =great.

should, would be certain to deal.

247. **being...grief**, it being that I abound in grief; but also with the idea of going readily in any direction: cp. *T. and C.* v. 2. 41, "You flow to great distraction." For the construction see Abb. 378. Johnson remarks, "Men overpowered with distress eagerly listen to the first offers of relief, close with every scheme, and belive every promise. He that has no longer any confidence in himself is glad to repose his trust in any other that will undertake to guide him."

250. **for to strange**, etc. Rolfe quotes *Haml.* iv. 3.9—

"Diseases desperate grown
By desperate appliance are relieved".

Delius notices the alliteration in *strange*, *strangely*, *strain*.

256. **freely**, there is no need for you to do that, for I weep of my own accord, without being desired by anyone.

258. **deserve of me**, *i.e.* deserve and obtain. Nowadays the more usual idiom would be "how much might *not* the man deserve!"

261. **even**, plain. Rolfe compares 2 *H. VI.* ii. 3. 2, "give *even* way unto my rough affairs."

263. **but not yours**, *i.e.* whom I hardly consider a man.

266. **it were as possible**, etc., *i.e.* as to believe what you say.

269. **I am sorry for my cousion**, another way of saying, 'If you wish to make me confess that I love you, you will do something to avenge my cousin.'

270. **by my sword**, etc. To swear by one's sword was to swear by the cross, the hilt in those days forming, with the handle, a cross.

273. **eat it**, Beatrice means the oath he has sworn, Benedick takes the words literally of his sword.

274. **eat your word**, recant your word. Rolfe refers to 2 *H. IV* ii. 2. 149.

275. **with no sauce**, etc. In *H. V.* v. 1. 36, Fluellen compels the

braggart Pistol to eat his leek (in confession of his cowardice) with the *sauce* of blows.

277. God forgive me ! *i.e.* God help me ! *i.e.* for being loved by you, but Benedict pretends to take the words literally, and asks, Forgive you for what offence ?'

279. in a happy hour, just in time, just at the right moment.

287. to deny it, by refusing ; see Abb. 356.

289. I am . here, "I am gone, am lost to you, while still here in the body" (Delius), said as she is forcibly detained by Benedick.

293. be friends : on the expression "Friends am I with you all," *J. C.* iii. 1. 220, Craik writes, " 'This grammatical impropriety,' Henley very well remarks, 'is still so prevalent as that the omission of the anomalous *s* would give some uncouthness to the sound of an otherwise familiar expression.' We could not, indeed, say '*Friend* am I with you all' : we should have to turn the expression in some other way. In *Troilus and Cressida* iv. 4. [72], however, have 'And I' ll grow *friend* with danger.' Nor does the pluralism of *friends* depend upon that of *you all* : 'I am friends with you' is equally the phrase in addressing a single person. *I with you am* is felt to be equivalent to *I and you are*."

297. approved, proved, as above, ii. 1. 336.

in the height a villain, a villain in the highest degree. The construction is "Is not he that hath slandered, etc., approved, etc., *i.e.* for doing so."

299. bear her in hand, delude her into the belief that all was well : a common expression in Shakespeare.

302. I would eat, etc. Steevens quotes from Chapman's *Iliad*, bk. xxii—

"Hunger for slaughter, and a hate that eates thy heart *to eate*
Thy foe's heart."

304. a proper saying ! a fine thing to say ! absurd !

309. princes and counties ! *i.e.* they are fine fellows to call themselves princes and counts ! They have much that is noble in them ! On *counties* see above, ii. 1. 167.

310. goodly...Confect, the words "a princely testimony' show, as Grant White seems to have been the first to point out, that in the first *count* there is a play upon the word in its two senses. "In Shakespeare's time," he says, "the French title *Count* was pronounced like *conte* or *compte*, meaning a fictitious story, a word which was then in common use." Rolfe notes that the quarto reads "*counte, counte* comfect." Staunton neatly paraphrases the expression by "My Lord Lollipop."

311. for his sake, for my sake ! The former means "so that I might meet him, man for man" ; the latter, on my account, to serve me.

313. courteseis, "mere forms of courtesy . . . . The curtsy was formerly used by men as well as by women. Cf. *R. III.* i. 3. 49, *L. L. L.* i. 2. 66, *A. W.* v. 3. 324" (Rolfe).

314. tongue, *i.e.* mere words.

trim ones, fine, *i.e.* empty nothings, palaver and nothing else.

Steevens explains, "Not only men but trim ones are turned into tongue, *i.e.* not only *common* but *clever* men" ; but Rolfe points out that the change from singular to plural was not uncommon in Elizabethan English.

is now as vailiant, s accounted as valiant.

316. **with wishing**, with grieving, *by* wishing, *through* grieving.

319. **use it for my love**, etc., if you wish to win my love you must make some other use of your hand than that of merely swearing by it, *i.e.* you must kill Claudio.

324. **engaged**, pledged to your service.

326. **dear**, heavy.

327. **I must say**, etc., *i.e.* I must pretend, as it has been agreed upon, that, etc.

Scene II

Stage Direction. in gowns. "It appears from the *Black Book*, 1604, that this was the dress of a constable in our author's time : '—when they mist their *constable*, and sawe the *black gowne* of his office lye full in a puddle' " (Malone).

1. **is appeard**, see Abb. 295.

dissembly, for *assembly*.

2. **for the sexton**, who is a sort of a president, and directs the examination.

5. **we have the exhibition**, etc. "Blunder for *examination* to exhibit" (Steevens).

8. **master constable**, the prefix of "master" to professions is frequent in Shakespeare *e.g.* "*master* parson, " "*master* doctor," "*master* schoolmaster," "*master* lieutenant," etc. Just below we have "*master* gentleman Conrade," though then Dogberry is speaking.

16. **yea, sir...villains !** These words, omitted in the folios, but necessary to the sense, were restored by Theobald. Their omission was probably due, as Blackstone supposes, to fear of the statute of James I. forbidding the use of God's name on the stage. *God defend*, God forbid. *It is proved*, followed by *it will...shortly*, is, of course, one of Dogberry's absurd anticlimaxes.

23. **a marvellous**, etc., a most *clever* fellow, no doubt.

I will go about with him, seems to mean will *circumvent him*, rather than *go to work with him*, the explanation given by Schmidt, *s. v. about*.

28. **in a tale**, in one tale, *i.e.* tell the same story.

32. **eftest**, quickest, best. Theobald and Steevens suppose this to be a mistake for *deftest* (*i.e.* most cleverly), the superlative form of *eft* not being found elsewhere.

38. **perjury**, Dogberry's blunder for *treason*, as below, *burglary* for *conspiracy*, and *redemption* for *damnation*.

40. **I promise thee**, I assure you.

42. **ducats**, see above, ii. 2. 46.

48. **upon his words**, basing his accusation upon Borachio's statements.

57. **refused**, rejected by Claudio

upon, in consequence of, as in iv. 1.221.

61, opinioned, he means *pinioned,* handcuffed.

62, let them be, etc. The reading of the old editions was "Let them be in the hands of Coxcombe": Malone restored the generally accepted reading given in the text.

64. God's my life, *i.e.* God is my life. Another oath more common at the period is *God's life,* or *'slife, i.e.* by God's life, the abbreviated form being used to avoid the penalty referred to on l. 16 above.

66. thou naughty varlet! 'naughty,' now generally used of children, had formerly a stronger sense : *varlet,* the same word as *valet,* originally meant a young vassal, a youth, a stripling ; the opprobrious sense, in which it is used here, being a later one.

68. suspect, for *respect* : below, *piety* for *impiety.*

he. *i.e.* the sexton.

that I am an ass, he of course means that he has been called so.

75. as pretty a piece of flesh, as fine a fellow as anyone, etc. Rolfe compares *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 68, *T. N.* i. 5. 30, *L. L. L.* iii. 1.36.

77. that hath had losses, who was once even better off than I am now : a not uncommon form of boastfulness. The conjectures *law-suits* and *leases* are simply ridiculous.

Act V. Scene I.

2. to second, assist, co-operate with.

7. suit with mine, accord with mine, are similar to them.

8. joy of her, respecting her, in her.

10. to me, was inserted by Hanmer, who is followed by Dyce and others.

Rolfe says that patience is here a trisyllable, as in l. 19 below ; but even so the verse halts woefully.

11. measure his woes, etc., let his woe be measured to be as great as mine in length and breadth.

12. strain for strain. Rolfe, following Schmidt, interprets *strain* as *feeling.* But in the large majority of the passages cited by Schmidt under that head there is the notion of *stretching* (inherent in the verb), and that notion seems to be present here, and to be indicated by the two next lines. Delius explains "Zug fur Zug," *i.e.* 'trait for trait.'

16. bid sorrow...groan. "The old eds.," says Dyce, "have '*And* sorrow, wagge,' etc. I adopt Capell's emendation, which is incomparably the best yet pro proposed, and I think, not to be objected to because the word '*bid*' occurs in the seventh line above. Johnson by a violent transposition reads, '*Cry* . . . sorrow wag! *and* hem when he should groan.' Walker (*Crit. Exam.*, etc., vol. i. p.307) proposes, '*Say,* sorrow wag,' etc. That the words '*sorrow wag*' are uncorrupted, and equivalent to 'sorrow be gone,' I feel quite confident." ... "To stroke the beard and cry hem ! ... is the very picture of a sententious pedant who would talk down or scold down the first gush of natural feeling, whether of grief or rage. Such was Achilles' epitome of Nestor in *Troilus and Cressida* i. 3. [165], where that chief is described as amusing himself with Patroclus' mimicry of the Greeks :

'Now play me Nestor ; hem and stroke the beard !'

And if any doubt still remained that Shakespeare by the expression 'stroke his beard' meant to describe a philosophic character, the following, from a comedy of the time, would remove it, viz, 'Yes, thou shalt now see me stroke my beard, and speake sententiously,' Chapman's *May Day* ii. 1" (Ingleby, who also refers to *A. Y. L.* i. 3. 18.) For hem, cp. I. *H. IV.* ii. 4. 18.

18. candle-wasters. Steevens, followed by Dyce and Staunton, understood this of *revellers*, strangely taking *drunk* in the preceding line in a literal sense. But Whalley has shown that the term was in use of those who wasted the midnight oil in *study*, and this interpretation is clearly in keeping with the general sentiment (see ll. 24, 26, and 35, 36), which in Ingleby's words is, "Show me a man who has my weight of sorrow and wrong, and yet is an example of stoical or cheerful endurance, and I will follow your counsel." For a full discussion of the whole passage, see Ingleby's *Still Lion*, pp. 129-135.

yet, *i.e.* even now.

22. tasting it, *i.e. they* tasting it ; see Abb. 379.

passion, emotion, strong feeling.

24. preceptial medicine, the medicine of precepts, the proverbs and wise reflection referred to above.

26. air, mere empty breath.

to speak patience, to counsel patience.

28. wring, writhe ; Rolfe quotes *H. V.* iv. 1. 253, and *Cymb.* iii. 6. 79.

29. sufficiency, stoical endurance.

30. so moral, so full of wise reflections.

32. advertisement, according to Johnson, "admonition, moral instruction."

34. I will be flesh and blood, I will give way to natural feelings and not pretend to be above them like the philosophers.

37. writ the style of gods, "an exalted language : such as we may suppose would be written by beings superior to human calamities, and therefore regarding them with neglect and coldness. Beaumont and Fletcher have the same expression in the first of their *Four Plays in One* –

'Athens doth make women philosophers,

And sure their children chat *the talk of gods*' "(Steevens).

38. made a push, probably here only another spelling of the exclamation *pish*, into which Pope unnecessarily altered the word. Dyce (*Gloss*), among other instances, quotes Day's *Law Trickes* 1608, "You that make a *pish* at the black art." Others understand "contend against," "defy" : but it is the contempt for pain which the philosophers pretended to feel that is here satirized.

sufferance, suffering.

45. comes, see Abb. 335.

46, good den. For the various forms of this expression, see above, iii. 2. 72.

49. are you so hasty now ? *i.e.* you were not always so anxious

123. high-proof, melancholy in the highest degree. A weapon is said to be "of proof" when it has been tested after manufacture; spirits are under or over proof according as they have been refined above or below a fixed standard; and the metaphor in the text may have its origin in either of these processes. In the *M. of V.* ii. 2. 38, Launcelot jestingly speaks of his father as "being more than sand-blind *high-gravel* blind": in *it* in the next line the subs. *melancholy* is to be understood from the adj.

wilt thou use thy wit? *i.e.* to drive away our sadness.

127. have been beside their wit, as we should now say, "beside themselves," or "out of their wits."

I will bid three draw, etc., an equivoque upon different senses of the word, to draw the sword for fighting, and to draw the bow across the strings of the fiddle, or musical instruments from their cases. Douce thinks there may be an allusion to the itinerant *sword-dancers*, who were looked upon as little better than vagabonds.

132. care killed a cat, a proverbial expession. Reed refers to Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour* i. 4, "hang sorrow, care'll *kill a cat*."

134. in the career, in full tilt, boldly, if you will set your wit in rest, like a lance, for a charge.

136. nay then...cross, that is, give him some other subject to talk about in the last one he did not shine: "a metaphor from tiltiug at which it was reckoned disgraceful for the tilter to break his spear *across* the body of his opponent, instead of breaking it in a direct line" (Dyce, *Gloss*).

138. by this light, a common oath, a stronger form of which was *God's light* or *'slight*.

140. to turn his gridle, The origin of this expression and its exact meaning are doubtful. According to some the metaphor is from a practice in wrestling when the buckle of the belt was turned behind in order to give the adversary a fairer grasp at the belt; and to do so was regarded as a challenge. According to other, the sword was formerly worn much at the back, and, to bring it within reach, the buckle of the belt had to be turned behind. Halliwell says the expression had nothing to do with either wrestling or challenging, and merelly meant change of mind or humour. This last explanation certainly does not suit the present passage.

142. God bless me from, etc., God saveme from, etc., said tauntingly.

143. I will make, etc., I will prove my assertion in combat in any way you prefer, giving you choice of weapon, place and time.

do me right, give me the satisfaction I demand or I will publicly proclaim you a coward.

146 her death, etc., you shall pay dearly for it.

147. let me hear from you, send me some friend of yours to act as your second in the duel and arrange the conditions of it.

148. so I may have, provided I may have

150. he hath bid . . . capon: Yes, says Claudio in answer to the Prince, he *has* invited me to a feast, in which the dishes I shall have

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97. a consymption, the disease technically called phthisis.

100. wit-cackers, professional wits, jesters.

101. cannot...humour, could not pissuade me from my purpose, inclination, by any number of jests.

102. if a man...about him, if a man is going to allow himself to be beaten with brains, he will do well not to put on a handsome dress, lest it should be spoilt. Of course *beaten with brains* metaphorically mears flouted out of his purpose.

104. giddy, fickle.

108. I did think, etc., it was may intention, etc.

in that=since.

111. single life, thy one life ; for the sake of the antithesis with *double*-dealer,' deceive.

113. look...thee, watch you carefully.

119. there is no...horn, an allusion to the walking-sticks used by elderly people "which were often headed or *tipped* with a cross-piece of horn or sometimes amber. They seem to have been imtated from the *crutched* sticks, or *potences*, as they were called, used by friars, and by them borrowed from the celebrated *tau*" [*i.e.* stick in the shape of the Greek letter T] "of Saint Anthony" (Donce, quoted by Dyce, *Gloss.*) : in *horn* there is of course the old joke we have had so often in this play.

122. with, by see Abb, 193.

124. brave, fine, excellent : and so, indirectly, *suitablecoming*, as Schmidt explains the word.

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS WITH BRIEF ANSWERS.

I. You think the Union of Benedick and Beatrice quite natural? How has Shakespeare effected this Union?

Ans. Shakespeare has been deservedly praised for his skill in overcoming the difficulties which interposed between the union of Benedick and Beatrice. Delay was impossible; the story of Benedick's love being a fable, great care was necessary to prevent Beatrice from discovering the deception practised on her, the discovery would have altogether defeated the design of bringing her and Benedick together. Shakespeare, therefore, combines in her mind a desire of revenge on Claudio with her new feelings for Benedick. In the most natural way possible, she engages for lover to call Claudio to account for the injury done to her cousin; and she is thus atonce compelled to drop her capricious humour and treat Benedick with confidence and candour his services merited. Benedick and Beatrice are the pure and Beautiful productions of Shakespeare's imagination. He first conceived and gave a faint sketch of their characters in *Love's Labours Lost.* In *Much Ado About Nothing* they are expanded into finished portraits and launched into a new scene of action of which he himself was the entire inventor. It is not often that Shakespeare appears as the constructor of his dramatic incidents. The plot on the two marriage-haters is ingeneously conceived and executed; and the characters of the parties being as similar as is consistant with the difference of sex, the practice of the same mode of deception on each of them is highly natural and humorous.

II. Describe the character of Claudio.

Ans. The general impression made by Claudio, the hero of Much Ado, is an extremely impleasant one. So naturally enough, he is denounced by the majority and just tolerated by the minority but approved by none.

He is "a vain coxcomb, with no will of his own. What can poor Hero expect from a marriage with such a wretch? (Roderich Benedix). "Arrogant, faint hearted, liable to hasty change of mood and in anger capable of heartless cruelty, he is not fit enough to be the hero of the play, the fortunate lover...This spoiled favourite of fortune is poorly endowed with energy, endurance and strength of character." (Kreyssing) But an apology is made by this critic in these words, "Here it is youth, endowed with unusual vitality, inexperienced, and spoiled by fortune, that pleads for forbearance and where could a better advocate for transgression be found?...Though there are flaws—and very ugly flaws they are—the better, honest metal beneath cannot but be perceived. Above all this youth with his lack of experience of good is equally a

stranger in the school of vice. Claudio is vain, arrogant, inconsiderate and fickle, but he is never vulgar ; the canker of debauchery has not eaten away his bloom. Says Gervinus, half apologetically, with regard to Claudio's characters ; Shakespeare has so blended the elements in his nature, he has given such a good foundation of houour and self-reliance to his unstable mind and fickle youth— that we cannot with all our disapprobation of his conduct, be doubtful as to his character. He is chargeable no doubt ; he continues, to be stable in no choice of friends and loved ones, since he had never continuously tested them. At the slightest convulsion of events, he is overpowered by first impressions and he is without the strength of will to reach the bottom of things. This would be an odious and despicable character, if the changeableness were not tempered by the exitability of a tender feeling of honour." Heinrich Bulthanpt, on the other hand, utterly condemns his character. 'I, for my part, declare that the enumeration of Claudio's heroic deeds always arouses my deep disgust, and that I should have left the theatre, but for the presence of Benedick, Beatrice, and the watch, whom I always regard distinctly apart from the Count...without his military laurels, the prince's favour, and the recommendation of good looks, and an amiable disposition, he would be absolutely insufferable. He is not without noble traits, else how could he appear as a gentleman...His youthful impetuosity, the spoiling he has had at the hands of fortune may suffice, perhaps, to explain the frivolous credulity with which he accepts Don John's calumnies, but not the malicious revenge which he takes upon his betrothed and, 'indirectly, upon her father, who is the Governor of Messina and his host. This makes Claudio aesthetically impossible ; only a deeply tragic turn to the drama could rehabilitate him...The pity is that such a man as Claudio should drag down with him into aesthetic ruin Hero, Leonato, Antonio, and even Benedick and Beatrice."

III. Comment upon the remark : "Man must always be susceptible to the joy of being beloved. Beatrice and Benedick make shipwreck upon this charactersitic of human personality,"

Ans. In more than one sense, Shakespeare attacks the natural weakness of mankind in this comedy. In it he recognises this human element, which makes all vulnerable, dragging down to the sphere of chance. No human being—Shakespeare says in effect—exists, who cannot be thrown off his balance if assailed through his temperament. This is the point of view from which Shakespeare composed this comedy.

This happens with Benedick and immediately afterwards with Beatrice. Both of them fall into the trap set for them or to quote Hero, 'devour greedily the treacherous bait.' But wherein lies the reason for this rapid and total rout of these two persons, who are apparently so steadfast and in vulnerable ? Shakespeare tells us plainly enough : it lies in every human being's temperament. No self-poise, no steadfastness can save him from vulnerability in some

one spot. If his temperament be normal, and not degenerate, man must always be susceptible to the joy being beloved. Beatrice and Benedick make shipwreck upon this characteristic of human personality ; it is the corner-stone of Don Pedro's *treacherous* scheme which causes them to belie their formerselves, a scheme devised with extreme subtlety and knowledge of mankind. It is most interesting to note the lever which Don Pedro employs to put his scheme in motion. We here meet with a profound psychological conception, one which can be traced to the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, in which Shakespeare influences his characters through the *eye.* In *Much Ado About Nothing* he does it through the *ear.* When we speak of possessing a man's ear, we have man himself, that we control him, and modern psychology recognises the profound mental significance that the ear. It is this significance that Shakespeare illustrates here for the first time in Benedick and Beatrice. If we study Don Pedro's tactics more closely still, we find that he contrives to influence the antagonistic personalities of the twain, and although their attitude hitherto has been almost hostile, to make lovers of them. He contrives it by forcing them to *overhear*. By this one stroke of art, at the very outset, he robs them of all their peculiar advantages. Their wit, their readiness of tongue, their mental dexterity and volubility, in short every offensive and defensive weapon of which they have hitherto made use to ward off the danger of any deep impression, is useless to them. They are condemned to complete, absolute *passivity* and forced to play the part of silent listeners.

As the result of our study, the view of mankind which Shakespeare illustrates in this play may be summed up thus : Man in spite of all his boast of freedom in independence, is but the impotent creature of his temperament,—this is the force that controls his personality, and its development ; in accord with this view, while on one hand there must be no more talk of freedom of will, and self-mastery, on the other there needs only a certain temperament to force us to succumb to evil.

IV. Write a brief note on the character of Don John.

Ans. Don John's character is drawn with dismal veracity. A throughly ill-natured, bitter, revengeful scoundrel, whose passions are too sordid for any heroic crime,—he is a gloomy, isolated egotist. His schemes are concocted in the darkest secrecy. He is afraid of carrying them out, and escapes responsibility for them by flight. The mere sight of him is gall and wormwood. Even the merry Beatrice cannot look at him without suffering from heart-burn for an hour. One single paradoxical stroke of the pen would have overdrawn him and have made him ridiculous. But Shakespeare, with his easy command of such a means, scorns it here. He draws upon his vast knowledge of human nature to create this figure ; he employs all his art to intensify the gravity of the situation. To this scoundrel, Claudio surrenders the honour and welfare of Leonato and his daughter ! Without hesitation he credits the

calumny and with what inconceivable clumsiness is the slander devised !

Don John's unadulterated malice lacks all motive, and his personality brings into far more irreconcilable contrast the colouring of the crisis with the humorous tendency of the play appears Bandello's novel. The psychological portrayal of the *plain-dealing villain* is quite an unsatisfactory.

V. Give a brief critical appreciati on of the character of Beatrice.

Ans. Shakespeare has exhibited in Beatrice a spirited and faithful portrait of the fine lady of his own time. High intellect and high animal spirits meet in her and excite each other like fire and air. In her wit, brilliant without being imaginative, there is a touch of insolence, not unfrequent in women when wit predominates over reflection and imagination. In her temper, too there is a slight infusion of the termagent. But though wilful, she is not wayward ; she is volatile, not unfeeling. She has not only an exuberance of wit and gaiety, but of heart and soul, and energy of spirit. She thought of a man of God's making not good enough for her and disdained to be overmastered by a piece of valiant dust.' Her generous, enthusiastic attachment to her cousin is quite striking. When Hero's father believes that tale of her guilt : when Claudio, her lover, without remorse or a lingering doubt, consigns her to shame : when the Friar remains silent, and the generous Benedick himself knows not what to say, Beatrice, confident in her affections, and guided only by the impulses of her own feminine heart, sees through the inconsistency, the impossibility of the charge and exclaims, without a moment's hesitation, 'O, on my soul, my cousin is belied. But Benedick is no match for Beatrice. No man is a match for a witty woman. The wit of Beatrice is bitter but it is seldom without fun. Of Rosalind in *As You Like It* and Beatrice, former is more engaging than the latter. Unlike Rosalined, her life has been and is, while we see her one of pure sunshine. Sorrow and wrong have not softened her nature, nor taken off the keen edge of her wit. When we are introduced to her, she is a great lady, bright, brilliant, beautiful, enforcing admiration as she moves 'in maiden mediation fancy free,' among the fine ladies and accomplished gallants of her circle. The sacred fountain of tears has never been stirred within her. Her life has been.

"A summer mood,

To which all pleasant things have come unsought,"

and across which the shadows of care and sorrow have never passed. She has a quick eye to see what is weak or ludicrous in man or woman. The impulse to speak out the smart and and poignant things is irresistable. She does not mean to inflict pain, though others, besides Benedick, must at times have felt that every word stabs', She simply rejoices in the keen swordplay of her wit, as she would in any other exercise of her intellect, or sport of her fancy. 'I was born, she says of herself, to speak all mirth and no matter.' She

has sent away all her suitors, because the independence of her maidenhood is very dear to her. But there are indications in the earlier scenes of the play which make us believe that Beatrice has already begun to see in 'Signor Benedick of Padua' qualities which have caught her fancy. She has noted him closely, and his image recurs unbidden to her mind with a frequency which suggests that he is at least more to her than any other man.

VI. Comment upon the following statement; "Here in 'Much Ado About Nothing' is no stuff for a comedy. A girl slandered and ill-treated to an unutterable extent is not an object to awaken merriment. And it is degrading that she should finally, without hesitation, marry her slanderer."

Ans. In support of the above statement of Roderich Benedix, we ought to consider the character of the *dramatic personre.* Here is Claudio, a vain coxcomb, with no will of his own. What can poor Hero expect for a marriage with such a wretch ? Here is the prince pervading the entire play, gossiping interminably, and never arrousing in us the faintest sympathy. He nither attempts nor achieves anything. Here is the governor of whom the same might be said. He has brother Antonio, so old that he 'waggles his head' and has 'dry hand.' Here is the rascally slanderer, a rascal only because the poet chooses him to be one ; he himself has no reason for it. And there are several waiting maids running about through the play. All these persons are poetically worthless, for they are uninteresting, nay, well nigh tiresome. We cannot characterise them—they are all insipid. Essentially different are the two leading characters ; they alone, Benedick and Beatrice, make it possible to sit through the play ; they alone excite interest and give pleasure. Beatrice is Hero's cousin, a rather strong, audacious, girlish creature, who delights in inveighing against matrimony. She pleases us intellectually and appeals to our hearts because she is the only person who takes her cousin's part and enters the list in her defence. Therefore she ranks far above all the other personages of the play ; she is an admirable creation. Benedick is her companion part. He, too, abuses love and matrimony, but is never theless a fine honest fellow. The perpetual pyrotechnic display of sneering and jeering with that goes on between these two, is undeniably somewhat overdone. Puns, quibbles, plays upon words are very richly profuse. This play upon words is characteristic of all the personages in the play, and at times becomes insufferable. There is a third group in the play formed by the foolish Watch, whose stupidity unmasks the slander. Those belonging to this group are caricatures, and, like all caricatures are, really amusing. But there is rather too much of them for they appear in four scenes As regards the structure of the play, the combination of incidents does not lead to any fitting result. The principal event is, if not tragic, at least grave and agitating. It should have a natural result. There should have been serious atonement for the malicious and wanton insult offered to Hero by Don Pedro and Claudio. But theplay must be a comedy and

consequently there is universal reconciliation in the twinkling of an eye. That a deep-laid dramatic plot should come to nothing is beyond excuse; that a dramatic case should produce no dramatic effect. The scandalous interruption of the marriage in the fourth act results only in its postponement to the fifth act.

VII. Comment upon the effect of the revelation of Benedick's love by Hero's artifice on Beatrice.

Ans. When Hero and Ursula are gone, and Beatrice comes from her hiding-place, she has become to herself another woman. She is dazed, astounded at what she has overheard. "Do I look down contemptuously on other from the height of my own deserts? Do I carry myself thus proudly? Have I been living in a delusion? What an awakening! After this complete self-abasement comes fresh wonder, in the rememberance of what Hero and Ursula have said of Benedick's infatuation for hero. That he likes her, she has probably suspected more than once; and now she learns that it is her wicked, mocking spirit which has alone prevented him from making an open avowal of his devotion. All this shall be changed. If he indeed loves her, he must be rewarded. No one knows his good qualities better than she does. She will accept his shortcomings,—for what grave faults of her own has she not to correct? It is for the first time that we see the underlying nobleness and generosity to Beatrice leap into view. She neither reproaches her cousin, nor seeks to extenuate the defects laid to her charge. She trusts Hero's eport implicity, and being herself incapable of deceit or misrepresentation, she r gards Hore's heavy indictment as a thing not to be impagued. This is the turning point in Beatrice's life and a marked charge has come over her. Now the audience will be prepared for the development of the high qualities which she soon afterwards displays.

VIII. Analyse Beatrice's feelings after the accusation of her consin by Claudio.

Ans. When Claudio brings forward his accusation against his bride, Beatrice is struck dumb with amazement. Indignation at the falsehood of the charge is mingled with the keenest sympathy for Leonato as well as Hero. Hero has her friends, her attendants round her; but the kind uncle and guardian stands alone. Strangely enough, his brother Antonio, who plays a prominent part afterwards is not at the wedding. Antonio's explosion of wrath has to be reserved for a later scene. Had he been present, his outburst would have befallen at the very altar, and have interfered with the plot.

Now Beatrice's blood is all on fire at the disgrace brought upon her family and herself. When she hears the vile slander supported by Don Pedro, her eyes fall on Benedick, who stands apart wildered, looking on the scene with an air of manifest distress. Now Beatrice makes up her mind that he shall be her cousin's champion. Were she not a woman, she would herself enter the lists to avenge the wrong; since she cannot do this directly, she will do it indirectly by

enlisting this new found lover in her cause. How happy a coincidence it is, that Hero has so lately brougt the fact of Benedick's devotion to her knowledge ! All remembrance of the harsh, and unkind accusations against hereself, with which the information was mixed up, has vanished from her mind. It is Hero who reveals to her the unsuspected love of Benedick, at least its earnestness and depth, and Hero is the first to benefit by it. Benedick is so present to her thoughts, that when Hero faints in her arms, she call to him as well as to Leonato and the Friar, to come to her assistance.

IX. Comment upon Mrs. Jameson's remark that the following speech of Beatrice is "outrageous."

"Is he not approved in the height a villain......I would eat his heart in the market-place"

Ans. We-do not think it an 'outrageous speech'. Never was a woman so ill used as Hero. A governor's daughter accused of incontinence by her lover at the altar ! Beatrice knew she was as caste as herself—as they lay bosom to bosom. Her pride of sex, as well as her sisterly love, was up in arms at the base and brutal barberity ; she felt herself insulted, her own maidenhood snbjected to suspicion. And who was Claudio? She had heard his praises from the messengers. And this paragon led her Hero into the break her heart, and 'mire her name with infamy !, 'Oh, God ! that I were a man ! I could eat his heart in the market place,' is a proper prayer and a just sentiment. We repeat, it is not 'outrageous.' Did he not deserve to have his heart eaten in the market-place ? And if Beatrice could have changed her sex, she would have taken revenge from Claudio. In Beatrice commanding Benedick to 'kill Claudio,' we cannot bring ourselves to think that there can be any consciousness of exaggeration in the mind of any audience. There can be no doubt that it was a duty incumbent on Benedick, not only as a gentleman and a soldier but as a Christian, to challenge Claudio to moral combat. Was not Benedick, the lover, the betrothed of Beatrice, and was not Claudio worse than murder of her dearest and nearest female friend? She knew Hero's innocence, and so must Benedick. It is not 'temper,' as Mrs. Jameson terms it, that had the mastery with Beatrice. She was a high born, high spirited, high-honoured, high principled, pure, chaste and affectionate lady, and therefore she said, 'Kill Claudio.' Benedick was bound to challenge Claudio for his own sake, and that of the profession of arms. But she had no thought of its being within chances of fortune that her beloved could be vanquished in such a cause. In her indignant scorn of the insulter, she saw her own knight's sword at his throat.

X. Give a critical appreciation of the character of Hero.

Ans. The central point on which the main interest of the drama hinges is the daughter of the house, the quiet Hero. She is her father's pride and ornament and love. With a heart tender and foreboding, she fascinates even when she is mute by the overpowering impression of her chaste, modest nature. She can practice no wanton

playfulness. She would fain not suffer the unseasonable jest of her waiting woman. When she has played on Beatrice her successful trick she checks forbearingly every tea ing word. When a scandalous suspicion is cast in the most degrading manner against this picture of innocence, shame struggles silently within her. Her fiery eyes might have burned out the errors of her accusers, but she can find no words, and sinks mutely in a swoon. To the one who knows her, to Beatrice, she appears as she is, raised above all suspicion, although nothing speaks in her favour, and all witnesses and proofs testified against her. Such a being seems thoroughly qualified to form the happiness and pride of a family which consists a good honourable and honoured men. She leaves an indelible impression on the mind by her beauty, her tenderness, and the hard trial of her love. The passage in which Claudio first makes a confession of his affection towards her, conveys as pleasing an image of the entrace of love into a youthful bosom as can well be imagined ;

——"O, my lord,
When you went onward on this ended action,
I look'd upon her with a soldier's eye.
That lik'd, but had a rougher task in hand
Than to drive liking to the name of love ;
But now I am return'd and that war-thoughts
Have left their places vacant, in their rooms
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,
All prompting me how fair young Hero is,
Saying. I lik'd her ere I went to wars." (I. i.)

In the scene at the altar, when Claudio, urged on by the villain Don John, brings the charge of incontinence against her, appeals to her own conscious innocence and honour are made with the most affecting simplicity. Her restoration to the confidence and arms of her lover is brought about by one of those temporary consignments to the grave of which Shakespeare seems to have been fond.

XI. Show how Hero's character offers a contrast to the Beatrice.

Ans. The character of Hero is well contrasted with Beatrice's. When they are both on the scene together. Hero has but little to say for herself. Beatrice asserts the rule of a master spirit, eclipses her by her mental superority abashes her by her raillery, dictates to her answers for her and would inspire her gentle-hearted cousin with some of her own assurance. But Shakespeare knew well how to make one character subordinate to another, without sacrificing the slightest portion of its effect And Hero, with all the interest attached to her as the sentimental heroine of the play, possesses an intellectual beauty of her own.

XII. Coleridge says : "Don John is the main spring of the plot." Comment upon this and give a critical estimate of his character.

Ans. According to Coleridge, Don John is the main spring of the the plot, although he appears only at the moment when his intervention is necessary to keep the plot moving, and then promptly

withdraws from the scene. Among all the other principal characters in the play, merry in their prosperity and luxury, the bastard John appears as their single contrast. Fortune has never smiled upon him, nor he indeed upon fortune He is by nature of a sour temper, melancholy and dejected surrounded by servants of a similar character Incapable of concealing his feelings, he exhibits his resentiment and sadness to every one, and his outward reconciliation with his brother cannot hide his unreconciled heart; he would rather be disdained of all, than 'fashion a carriage to rob love from any.' He is stick with envy and vaxation, especially with regard to Claudio; he is inclined to play on him any bad trick and ready to pay his confidential seravnt with heay ducats for his help in such mischief. It dissatisfies him that the feigned reconcilation affixes on him a kind of 'muzzle'; it seems a necessity of nature on all occassions, as it is in his present peculiar position, to play the part of the destroyer of peace and joy; he takes pleasure in poisoning all the joy of his friends. This fortune forsaken man feeds upon the idea of working some mis- chief for them. He throws himself among them in order that he may cross Claudio's marriage with Hero.

The trick by which, according to the tale. this jealous man suddenly disturbs the happy repose of the rest, is followed by another event. Borachio has betrayed to his master that Don Perdo would woo Hero for Claudio at the masked ball. He seems to find satisfaction in making himself believe that the prince is wooing for himself; he betrays the matter to Claudio whilst he assumes the appearance of thinking he is speaking with Benedick. Claudio's unstable credulous and changeable character, incapable of all calm reflection, is brought plainly to light on this small occasion. Don John's mere word is enough to make him consider his prince as convicted of breach of friendship and fidelity. to make him leave Benedick irriated and angry, and give up his Hero at once. Though the failure of the first innocent trick, John is at once provoked to a second of a more dangerous character. The incredible calumination of Hero is whispered by the bastard to the prince and Claudio. A tragic situation is created for the time being, but the expcsure of the whole plot by Dogberry and Verges comes as a stunning surprise which is also corroborated by the escape of John. But he is brought back to Messina under armed men and "brave qunishments" are devised for him.

XIII. The play gives an excellent example of the difference between wit and humour. Discuss.

Ans. Wit pleases by the keenness of the thrust, and the completeness of the parry. Each combatant is aware of the contest, becomes eager for victory in the rivalry of words, and anixious to avoid the smart of defeat. Where the two combatants are equally matehed. it is a pleasure for them and their audience. Where there is the thrust without the right or power of parry or retort it loses all its delightfulness, and becomes the cruel murder of sacasm. The contests of Benedick and Beatrice dellight us by their even sway of battle.

Humour at its best is unconscious, unintended. There is no idea of rivalry or struggle with others, but we laugh at the humorons man without thought of personal attack or defence. The pleasure is in what he says or does, not in its effect upon others. Wit pleases the intelligence, humour, the imagination. The sayings of Dogberry and Verges are true examples of the unconscious humour. They are not like Falstaff's, "witty in themselves and the cause of wit in other," but by their unintentional "derangement of epitaphs," as Mrs. Malaprop calls it, and by their sincerity of dullness, they have rendered themselves famous through all ages.

The student will notice that although Shakespeare has attempted to keep the atmosphere of Messina and given the majority of his character names of Italian origion, he comes back to England in his humorous scenes, and boldly gives the characters the English names of Dogberry, Verges, Oatcake, Seacole.

Study

OUR

SHAKESPEARE'S

AS YOU LIKE IT

Julius Caesar

OTHELLO

WITH

Paraphrase

AND

Notes